THE CLASSICAL FIVE STRING BANJO

A Complete Modern Text Book

by Walter Kaye Bauer

Featuring every possible style of musical performance.
Syncopation explicitly explained through the medium of rhythmic articulation.
Careful and understandable instruction of all chords.
Aimed at preparing the pupil to play in a musicianly manner, everything, from classical, rag time, jazz and country style.
Diagrams and pictures are purposely omitted to promote better reading and ear training.
The author recommends the purchase of a standard ring binder by each pupil. The student should then be given, only the number of sheets the teacher deems advisable, together with solos, duets etc. In this way, "looking ahead", is discouraged.

Walter Kaye Bauer

81 Robbins Drive, Wethersfield, Conn. 06109 (203) 529-5778

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THE FIVE STRING BANJO

While Thomas Jefferson, the author of our great Declaration of Independence, did write in his "Virginia Letters" about the slaves playing the "banjer", musicologists who have researched this instrument through all of Africa could find nothing like it. The nearest thing to the one "banjer" described, is an ancient Hebrew instrument called the "Rebab", which was a gourd shaped instrument with a skin head.

It must, therefore, be acknowledged that Joel Sweeney and his talented brother Sam (a member of Jeb Stuart's cavalry brigade) must get the credit for making the first banjo in the form we know it today.

Later on, Samuel Swayne Stewart of Philadelphia made the first of the beautiful banjos, followed in turn by other makers such as Luscomb, Gatcomb, Cole, Fairbanks, and then the sophisticated Vega, Bacon, Gibson, Orpheum, Paramount and Weymann. There were undoubtedly others that this writer was not acquainted with.

Stewart also invented the piccolo banjo (tuned an octave higher than the regular) the banjeurine (tuned a fourth higher) the cello-banjo, (tuned an octave lower than the first) the guitar-necked banjo and the bass banjo. All of these instruments are high-priced collectors' items today.

Since the banjo is American in origin, we naturally produced its first great performers. Among the first of these were two black men, James Bohee, who taught the Prince of Wales to play the banjo, and Horace Weston.

The great white performers were Alfred A. Farland, Fred Van Eps, Frederick J. Bacon, the peerless writer-performer Paul Eno, who coached all of the fretted instrument clubs of the University of Pennsylvania, William J. Bowen, Alexander Magee, Burton Gedney, Thomas J. Armstrong, Fred Stuber, Ruby Brooks, Harry Denton, George L. Lansing, A. A. Baab, William C. Stahl, William D. Kenneth, George W. Gregory of L'Infanta March and California fame, and Frank C. Bradbury. Mr. Bradbury is the only living survivor of this great group.

On the distaff side we had Fanny Hineline, Alice Kellar-Fox, Charlotte Robillard, and the peerless Shirley Spaulding (Mrs. George DeVoe) who no longer plays, but is now an authority on early American tin-ware and is the author of several books on this subject.

Todays great performers are some of whom the writer has never met or heard. Their ability will manifest itself someday to earn the same respect as the greats of the past. However, we must not forget John Sloan of Chicago, and Lloyd Longacre of Pittsburgh who are both eminent soloists.

Our hands must also reach across the sea to our English friends who have contributed much fine music for the banjo and many outstanding artists as well.

This book is dedicated to the memory of those greats of the past, and is a salute to all you fine players of the present. May it help to make more fine players of this great American invention.

WALTER KAYE BAUER
Wethersfield, Conn., August, 1978

THE APPROACH TO PLAYING

If the student has never had any knowledge of music, it would be well for him to learn, with the help of the teacher, all about the lines and spaces of the staff, the key and time signatures, the denomination of notes and rests, and to some extent something about dynamics.

Printing costs today have made many publishers omit such reference in the early part of their books. I sympathize with them.

Assuming that the student has had previous musical training, or has had a few lessons on the elementary theory above, he can now start his training, beginning with how to tune the instrument well.

Play the C, below middle C on the piano, or a C pitch pipe or tuning fork and carefully tune the bass (covered string) to this tone.

Now play the seventh fret of that string and listen to it carefully. The open third string should sound exactly like it. Take plenty of time!

Having these two strings in tune, play the fourth fret of the third string. This must sound exactly the same as the open second string.

Now play the third fret of the second string. This must be the pitch of the open first string.

Finally, play the fifth fret of the first string. This is the pitch for the fifth or commonly known "thumb string".

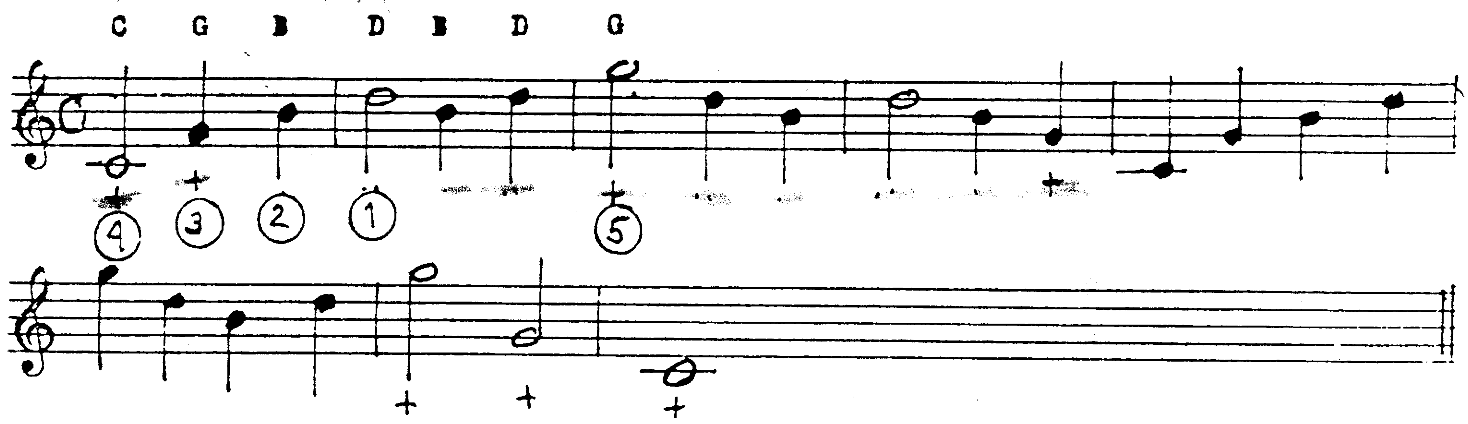
Now that you are in tune, play the first string open, then the second, next the third, again the second, again the first, and finally the high or fifth string. The result is the opening theme of the National Anthem, "Oh Say Can You See".

Holding the Banjo

In starting to play the banjo, one holds the rim of the instrument on the right leg, while the left hand supports the neck in such a manner, that the thumb which is aiding in the holding process, can move freely up and down the neck of the instrument. The tip of the thumb should be almost hidden under the neck. The peg-head of the banjo should be no higher than the eye.

The thumb and right hand fingers are indicated by these signs + . . . while the strings to be played are identified by a figure within a circle. Practice the following examples until it can be played freely.

THE OPEN STRINGS

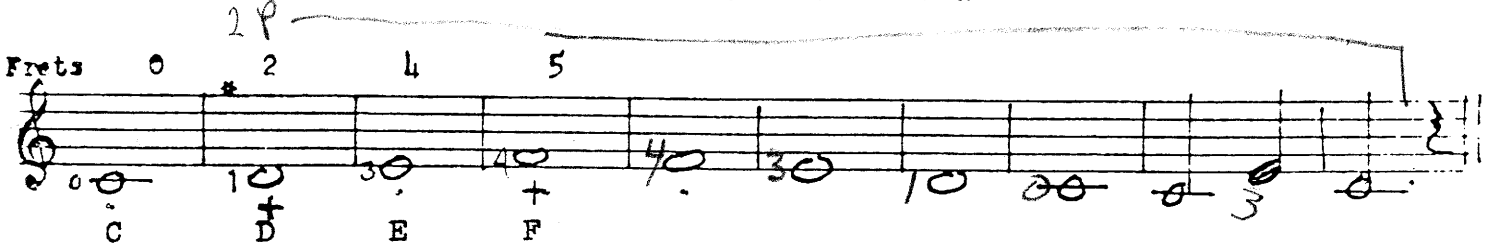


THE LEFT HAND FINGERS.

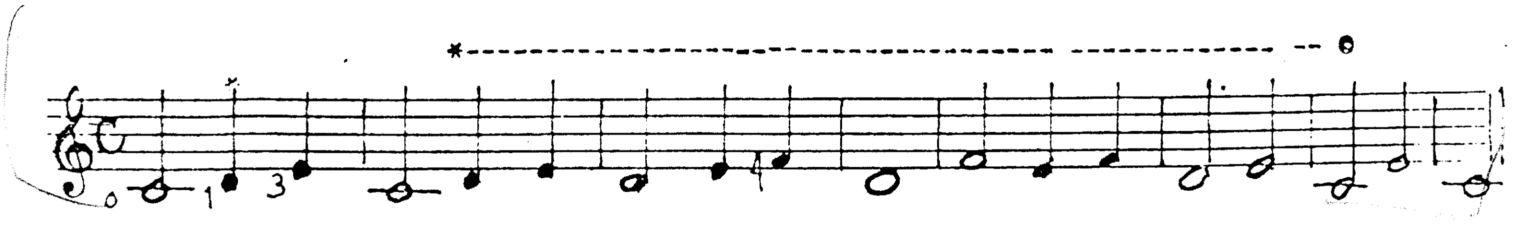
When fingering the notes on the strings, the student should remember one cardinal rule. Once a finger is placed on a note, it must not be lifted until it is required to play another note with it. Place the finger down firmly for each note. When descending, lift each finger in turn as the music indicates. When removing the last used finger from the string, (to sound the open string) do not allow the finger to pop up high, but just clear the string. In this way, it is ready to use again quickly.

Place each finger firmly down and just behind the indicated fret. The sign * means, hold the finger on that note until it is needed elsewhere or to play an open string.

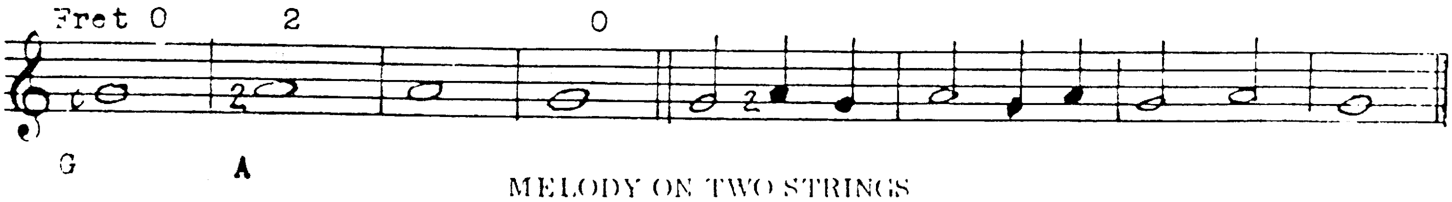
NOTES ON THE FOURTH STRING



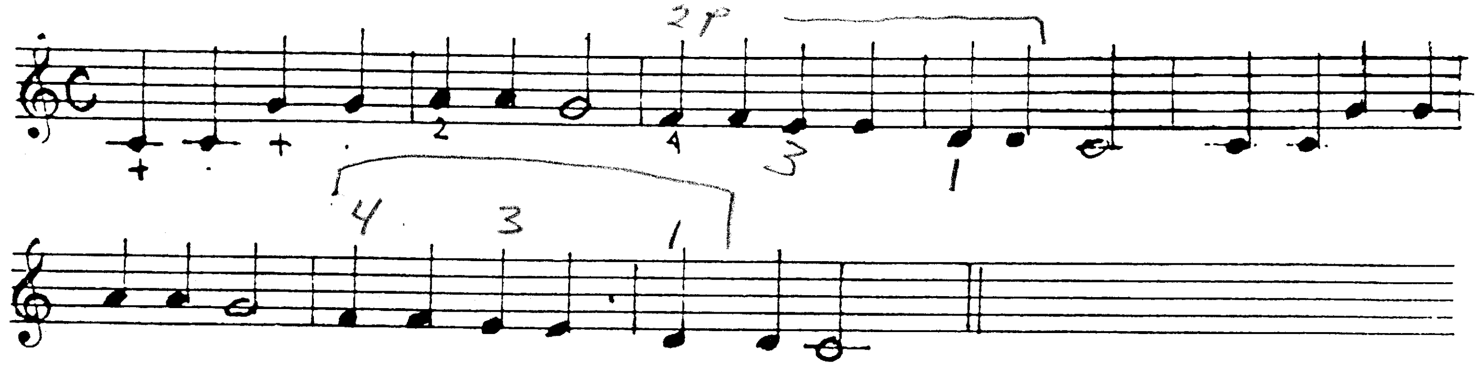
ETUDE.



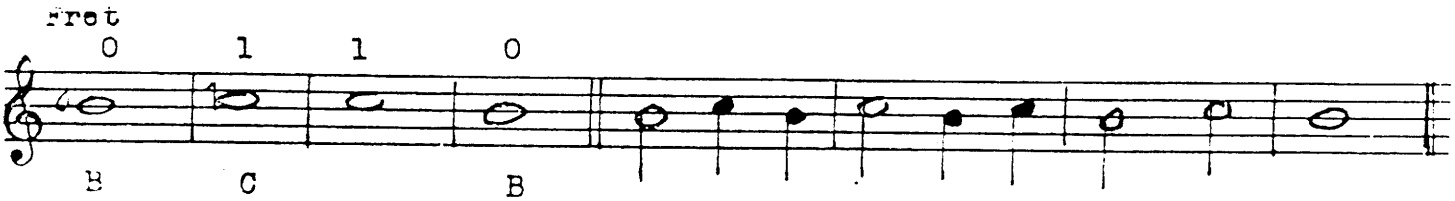
NOTES ON THE THIRD STRING



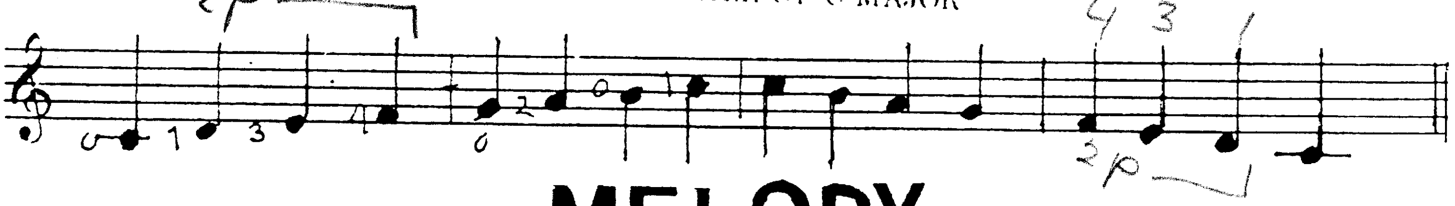
MELODY ON TWO STRINGS



NOTES ON THE SECOND STRING

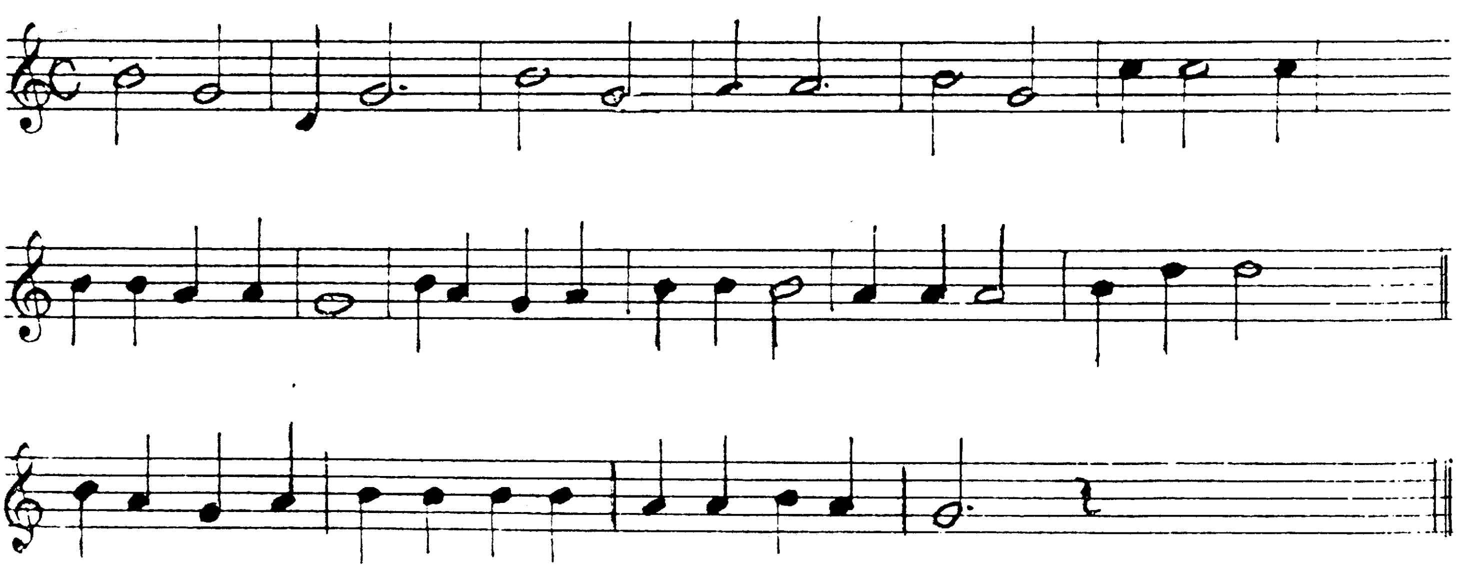


ONE OCTAVE SCALE OF C MAJOR



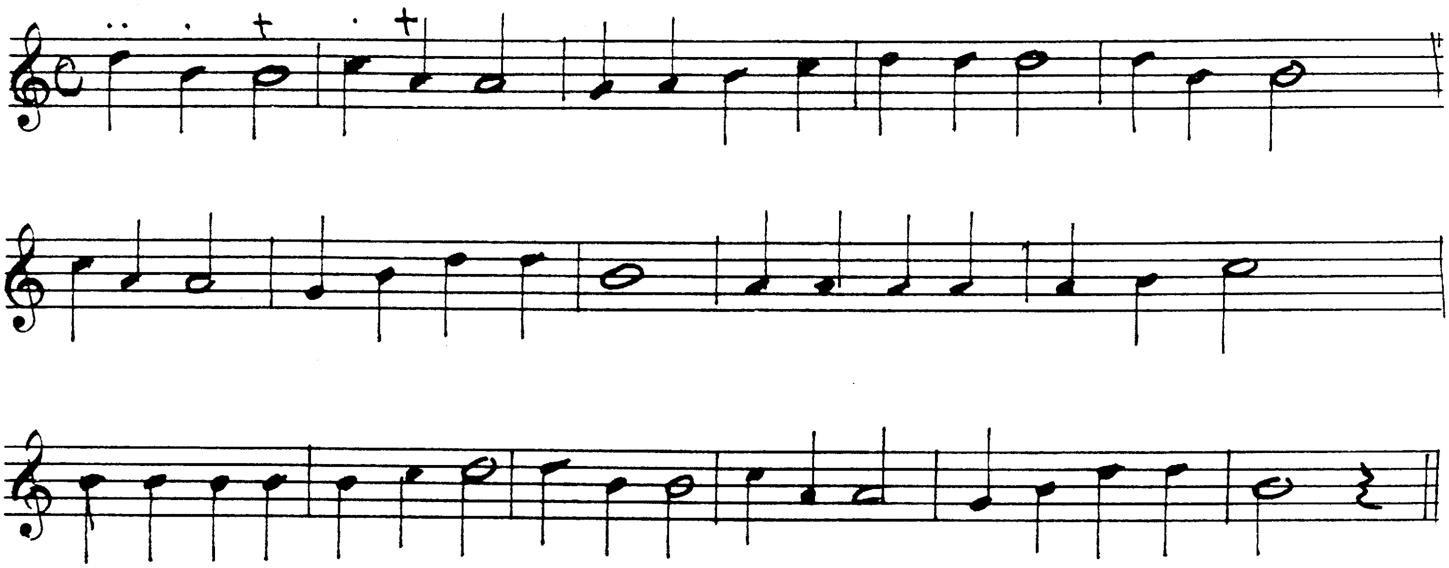
MELODY

On the Second, Third, and Fourth Strings

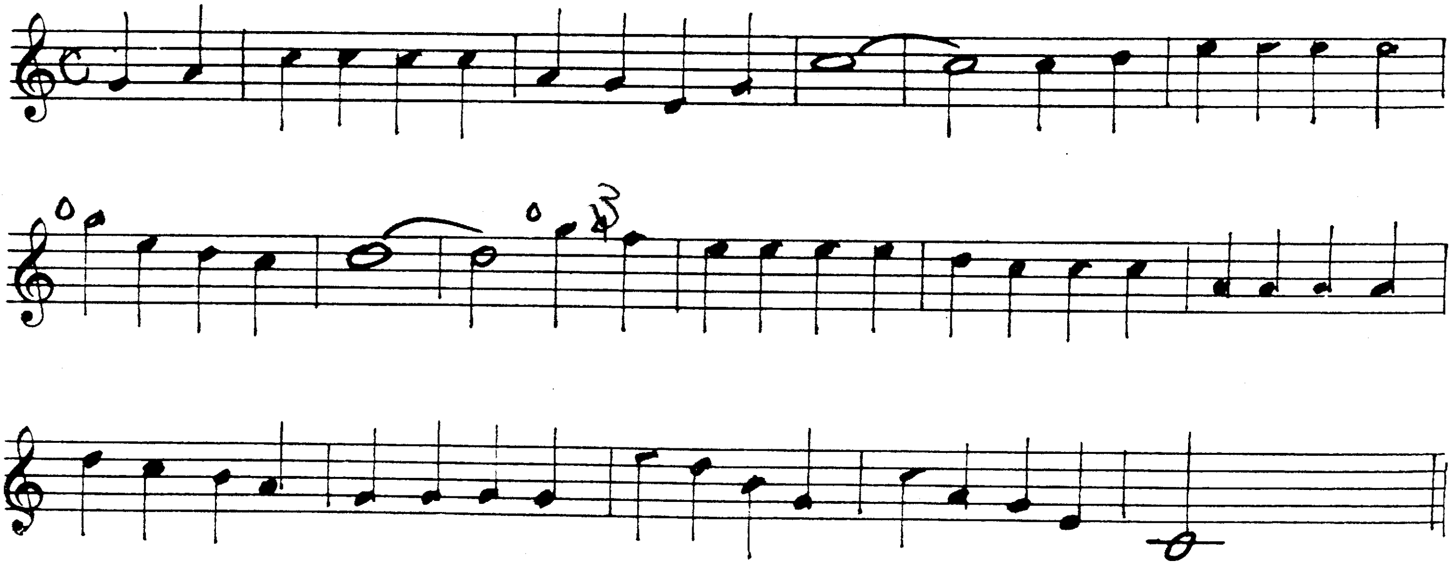


NOTES ON THE FIRST STRING

MELODY

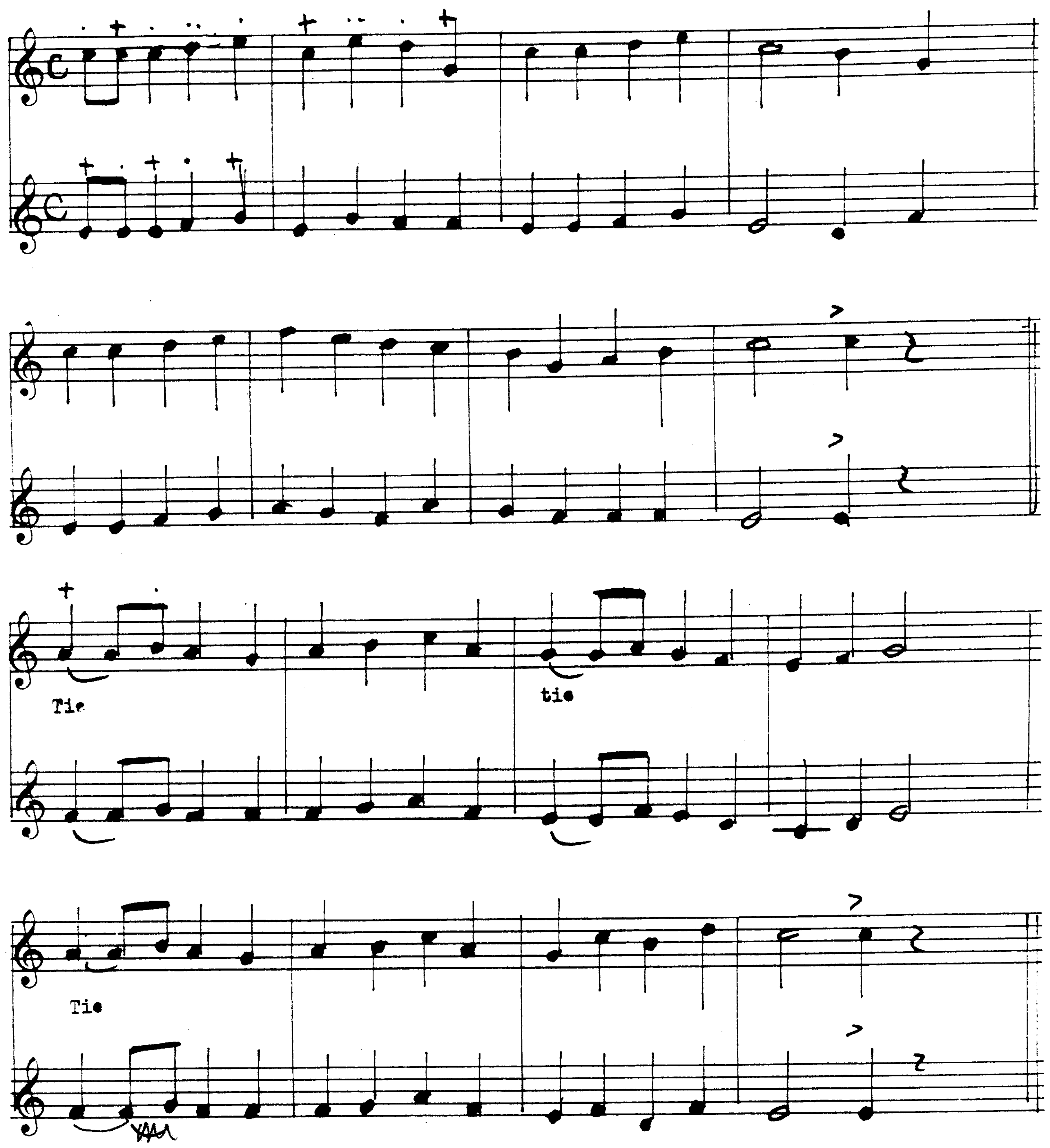


On Five Strings



On your way to business or school, and on the way home, give yourself a mental quiz on the note location on each string. In this way, your mind works like a camera. EXAMPLE: Notes on the fourth string C, open, first line below the staff, D, second fret, first space below the staff, E, fourth fret, first line on the staff, F, fifth fret, first space on the staff. When you get home and start practicing, you will really know your notes. Do this on all strings.

Elementary Exercises for Beginners

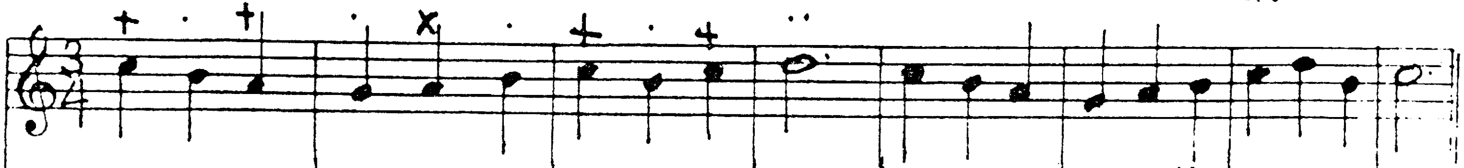


The student should be required to learn both the melody and harmony parts. In this way, he will improve his knowledge of the note location on all strings. If he has a tape recorder, he should be encouraged to record one part, and play the other part against it. Both the teacher and the player will be amazed at the rhythmic improvement when this is done.

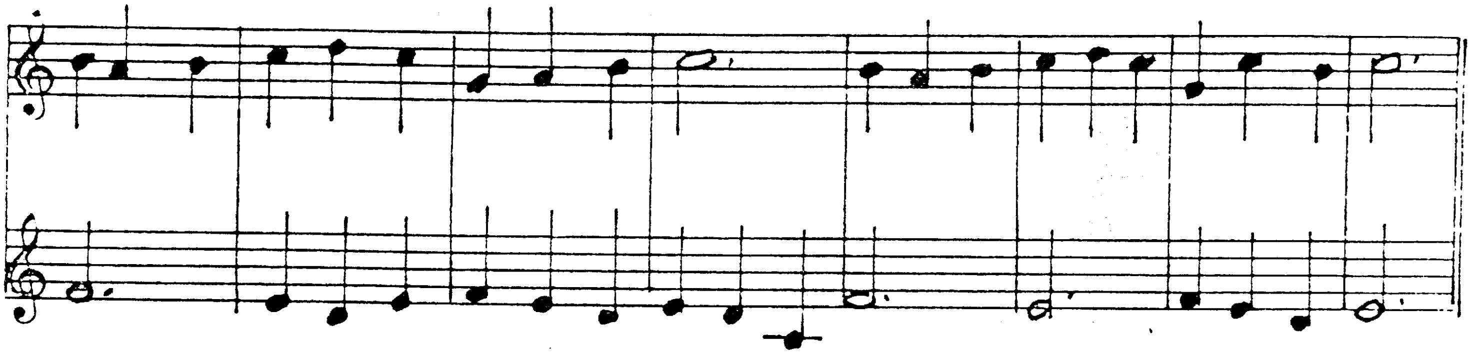
Contrary Motion

Accent the first beat of each measure.

A. KRAUSS

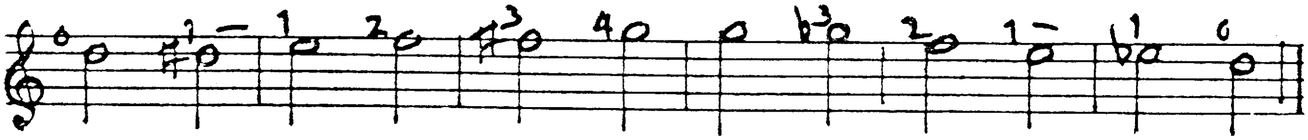


Note that the two parts move in opposite directions. Thus the term "Contrary"

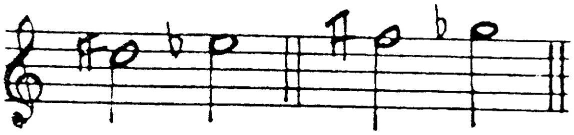


SHARPS AND FLATS ON THE FIRST STRING

A sharp raises a note a half step (one fret) while a flat lowers it the same distance. A cancel or natural restores a note to its regular sound.

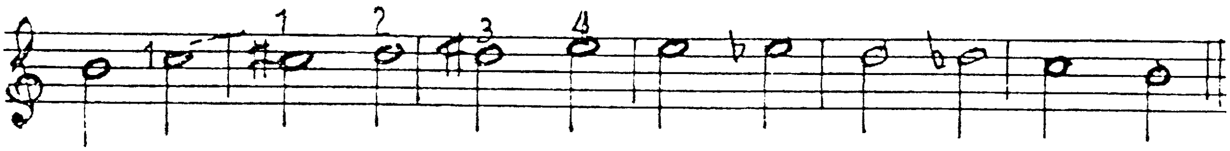


The notes D sharp and E flat are both on the second fret. F sharp and G flat are on the fourth fret. Any two notes which sound alike but are written differently are called "Enharmonics".

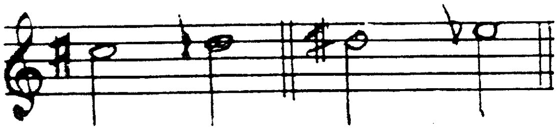


ENHARMONICS

SHARPS AND FLATS ON THE SECOND STRING

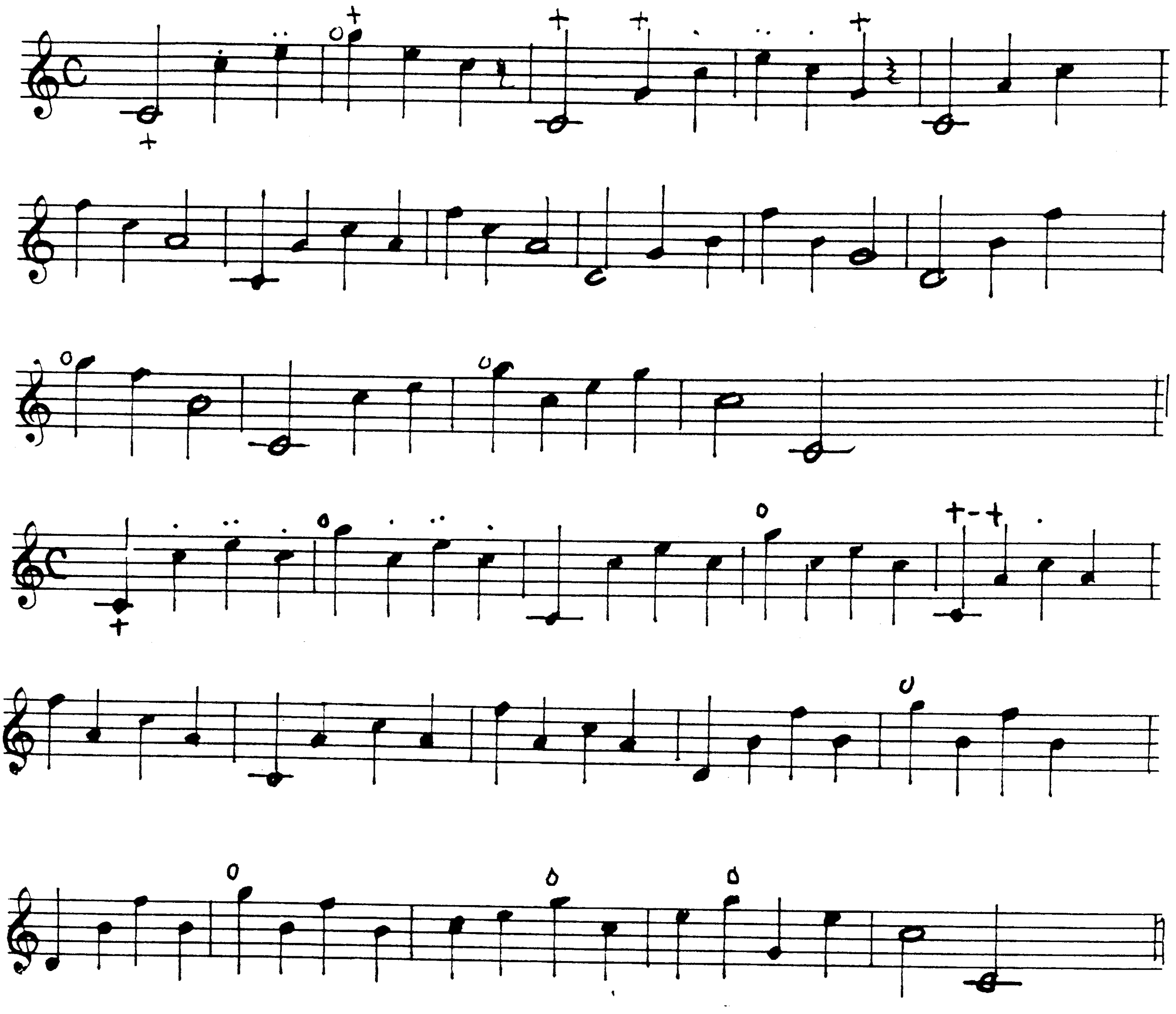


ENHARMONICS



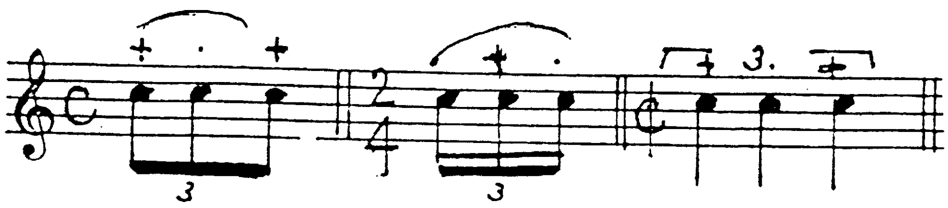
C sharp and D flat are both on the second fret, and D sharp and E flat on the fourth. Here are two more enharmonics.

Simple Arpeggios



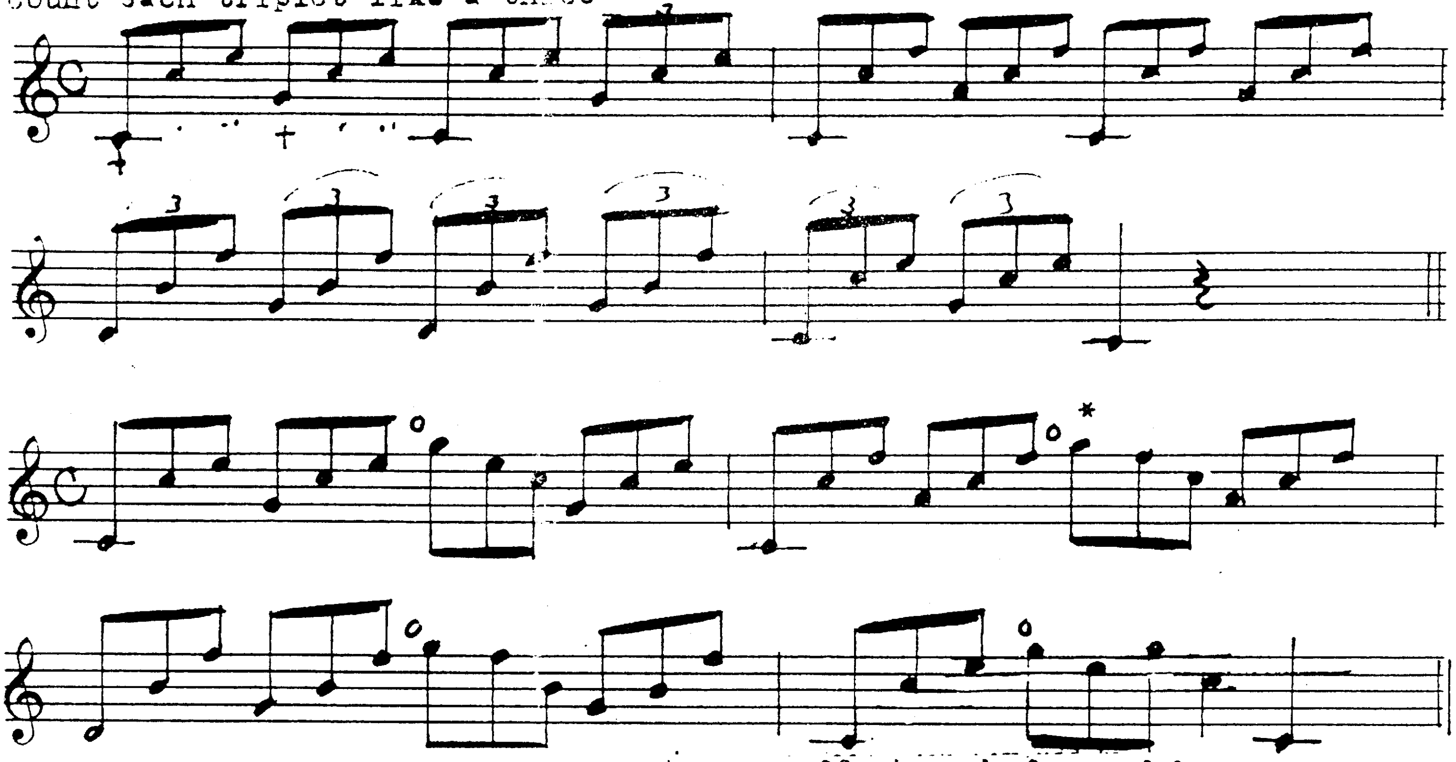
The Triplet

A group of three notes, over which a curved line or a bracket is placed, is called a triplet. Invariably the digit 3 appears over or under the curve or bracket. The three notes are played in the time of one beat or count, and should sound like a three syllable word such as, "multiply","butterfly", "beautify", or any other word of three syllables. In playing a sequence of triplets, be sure that there is no hesitation between the last note of the previous triplet and the first of the next. If one is careless here, the effect will be ---

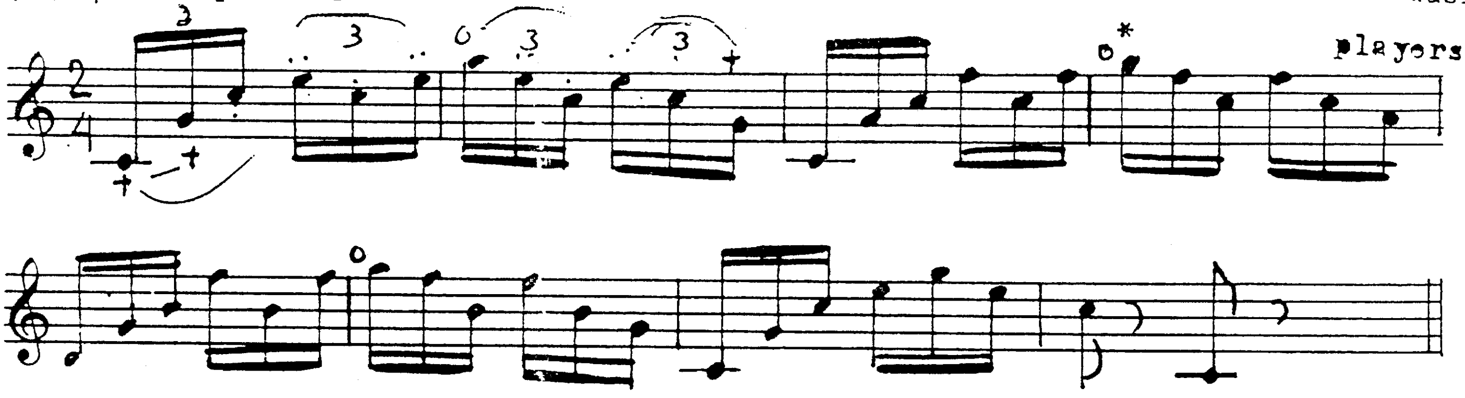


Arpeggios in Triplets

Count each triplet like a three syllable word such as "multiply"



*This is a "passing" tone and creates an effect much favored by mountain music players.

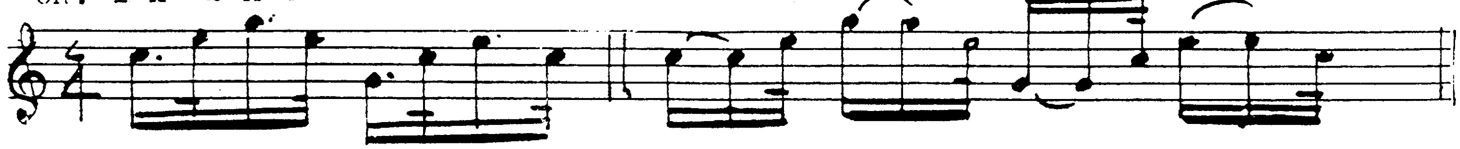


Dotted Notes

Written Played

SAY: Sweet po-ta-to sweet po-ta-to

OR: 1'n 2'n 3'n 4'n

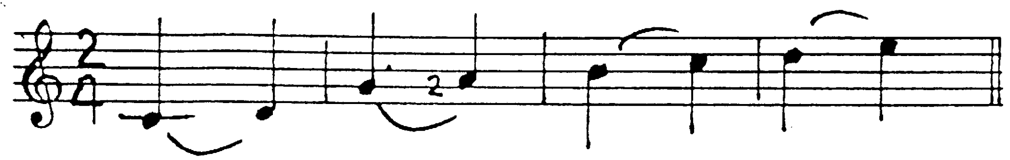


SAY: 1 uh an-a 2 uh an-a

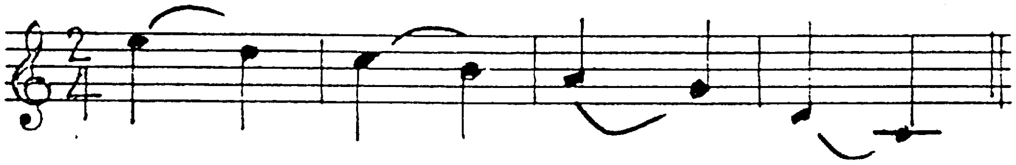
THE SLUR

One of the most fascinating effects we can get on the five string banjo is the slur. It is the act of blending one tone into the other without interruption. We can accomplish both ascending and descending slurs on the banjo. We also have what is termed prepared and un-prepared versions of each of the above.

In playing the ascending slur, the first note is struck by the right hand as usual. The required finger is then dropped with great force onto the next note. If we start with an open string, we call this the "un-prepared slur". Many so-called "blue-grass players call this "hammering".

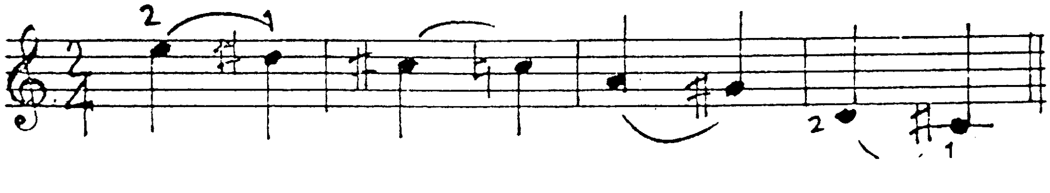


The descending version is accomplished by striking the first note, and then snapping the finger off the string. Remember! Merely lifting the finger will not give the right result. Modern players call this "yanking off".



In playing the prepared ascending slur, we start with a left-hand fingered note (hence the term "prepared"), and then drop the required finger onto the next note. Be sure that you do not lift the lower finger in doing this.

In playing the descending version, we must remember that lower fingered note is to be held firmly in place until the slur is completed. This is more difficult to execute, but the result is worth the effort.

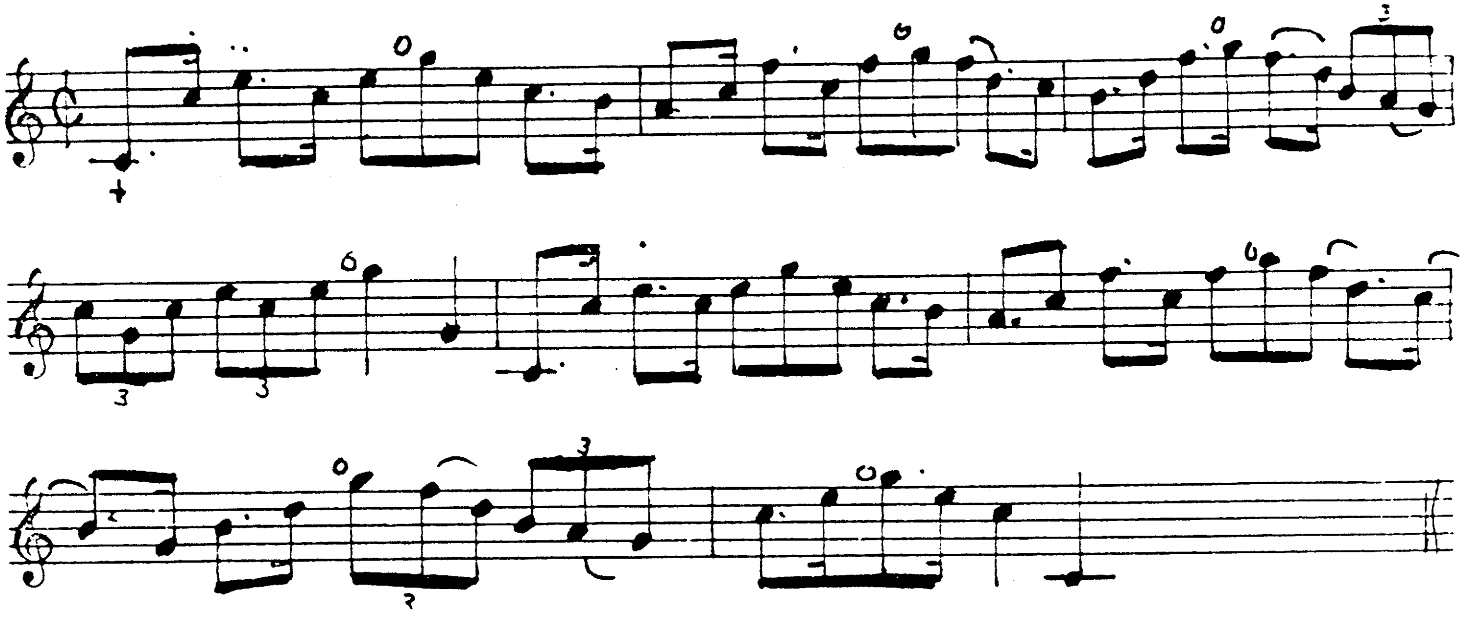


SOFT SHOE DANCE

In the late nineteenth century, and up to the first quarter of the twentieth, the American vaudeville theaters and the English "music halls" always featured what was termed "song and dance" teams. All of these featured a delightful and graceful dance called the "soft-shoe". This was a direct opposite of the more noisy "clog" and "buck-and wing" dance. The greatest performer was George Primrose.

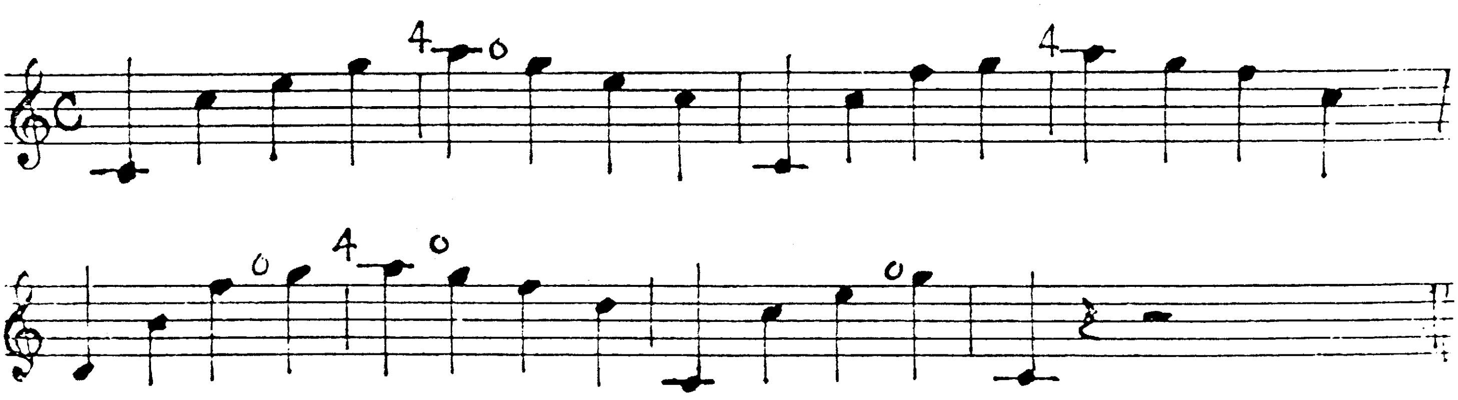
In the following number, dotted notes, triplets and slurs are all incorporated.

WALTER KAYE BAUER



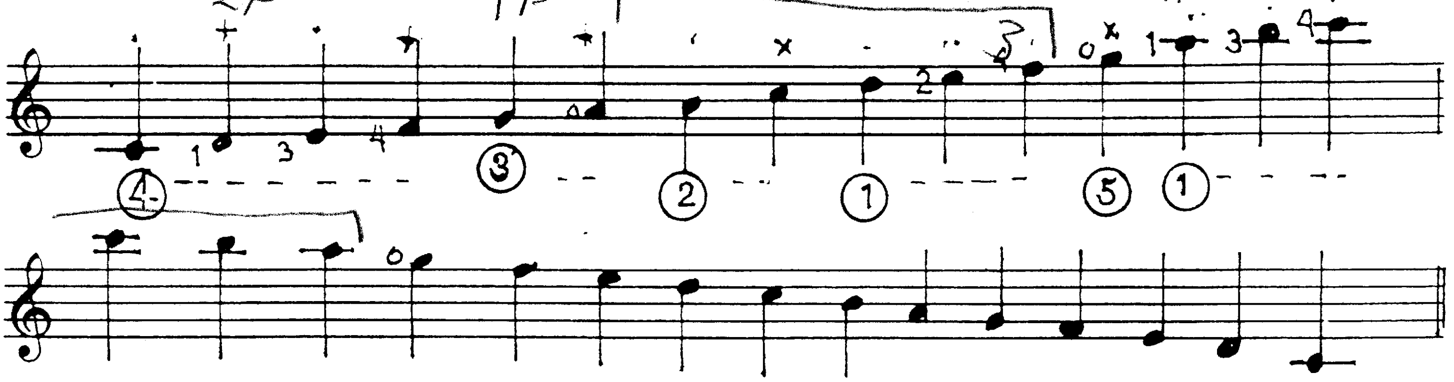
THE EXTENSION

Up to this point, our musical range has covered only an octave and a fifth. Since even the most elementary musical pieces generally employ six tones, we too will reach for this by playing the high "A" on the seventh fret. After a little practice, the student can do this without looking at the left hand.

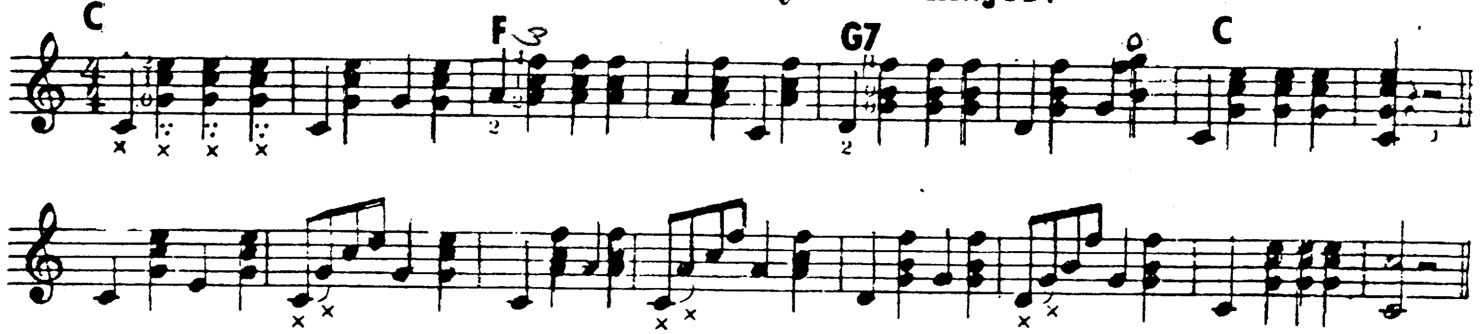


In the above example written in simple arpeggio form, the high A on the first or tonic chord, is the passing tone of the sixth. On the second, or sub-dominant chord, this high A is the third or tenth above the rest. On the next or dominant seventh chord, this high A is the ninth. Right now, this may sound too technical for the average student. Don't worry about it, it will work out in the end.

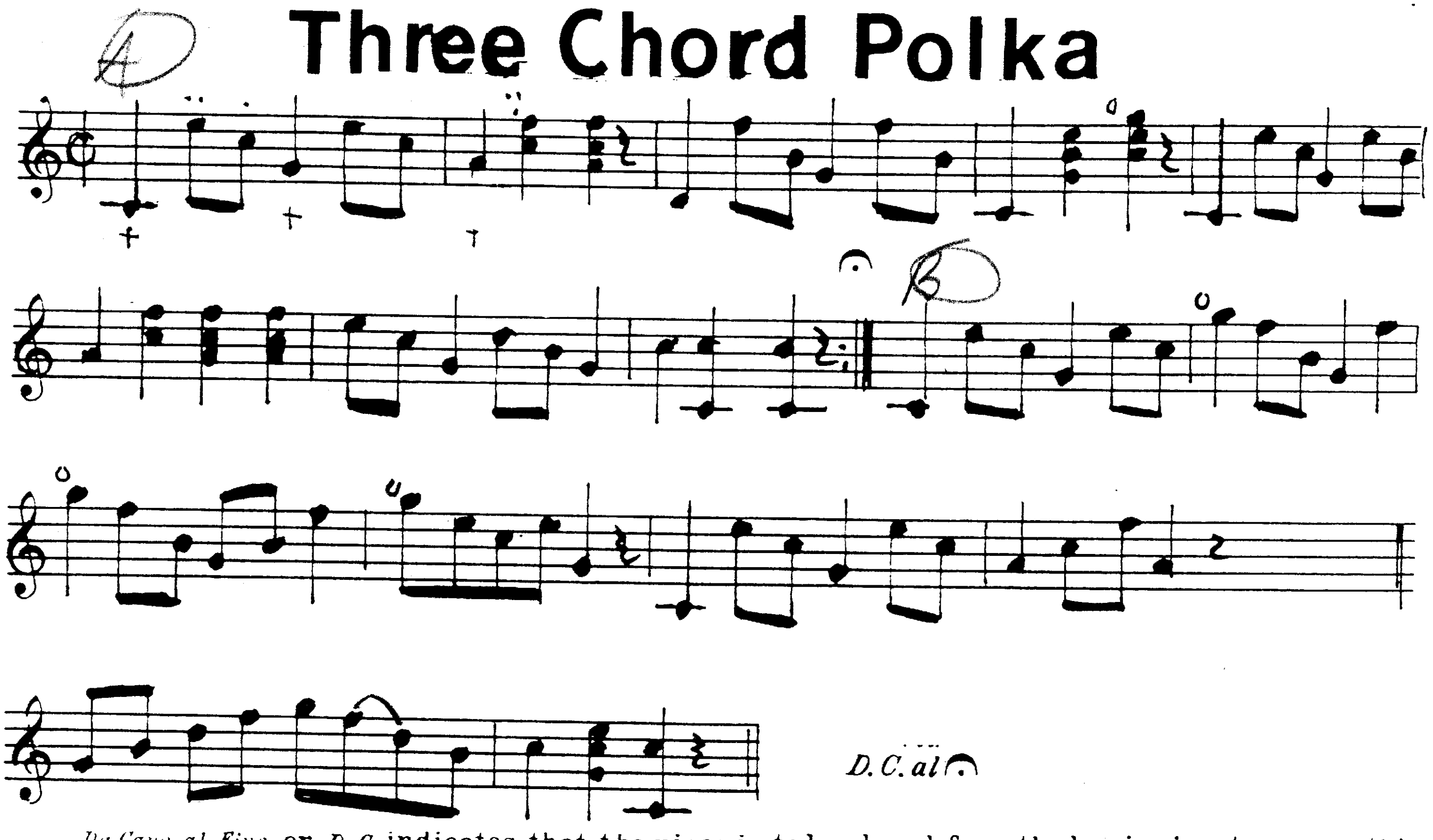
TWO OCTAVE SCALE OF C MAJOR



Chords in the Key of C major.



Three Chord Polka



Da Capo al Fine, or *D.C.* indicates that the piece is to be played from the beginning to *Fine*, or this sign 𝄐 placed over a double bar.

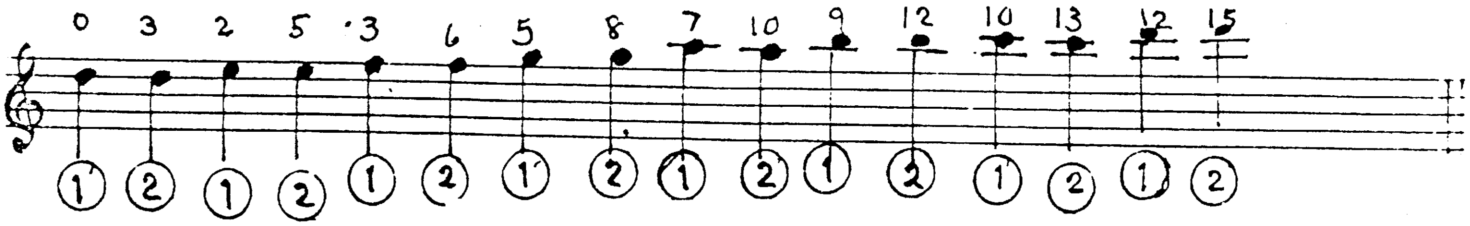
Double Bars mark the end of a strain. Dots placed before a double bar signifies repetition.

Tempo di Polka, in Polka time.

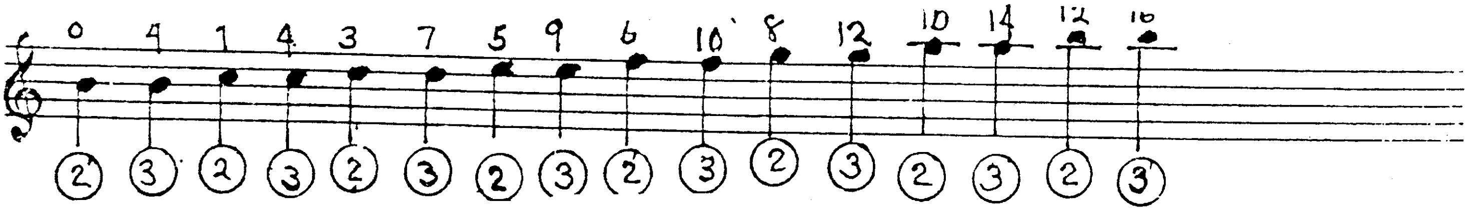
Duplicating the Notes

It is now time for us to begin to learn the notes on the second and third strings so that we can play a more advanced and enjoyable kind of music.

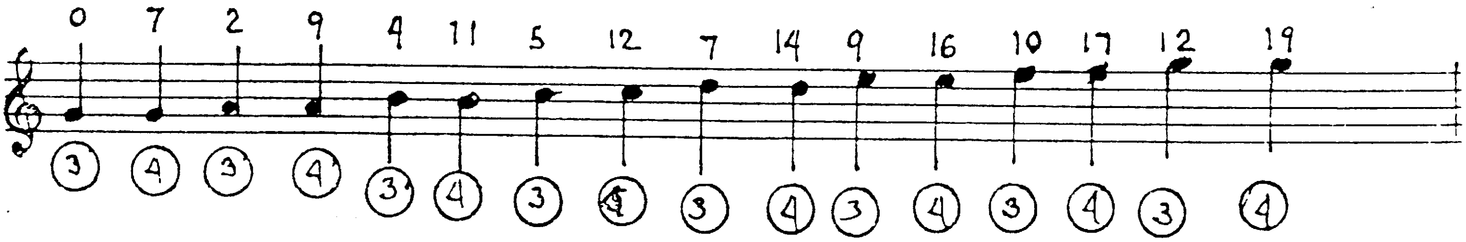
By following the next example, you can learn these notes very quickly. Any note on the first string, is duplicated three frets higher on the second string, (providing, of course, that you have your intrument in good tune). Thus, D open (first string) is played on the third fret of the second string. E on the second fret of the first string is duplicated on the fifth fret of the second string, etc. Don't be in a hurry! Learn one string perfectly before you begin the next one.



Assuming at this point that you have mastered the note locations on the second string, it is well to begin to learn those on the third. The notes on the third string are four frets higher than those on the second. Thus B (second string open) is duplicated on the fourth fret of the third string. C on the first fret of the second string is duplicated at the fifth fret of the third string, etc. Again, work for accuracy. Don't hurry.



The notes on the bass, or fourth string, will each be seven frets higher than those on the third. Later on, when the bass is elevated (tuned to D) the notes on the bass string will be the same as those on the first, except that they will sound an octave lower.

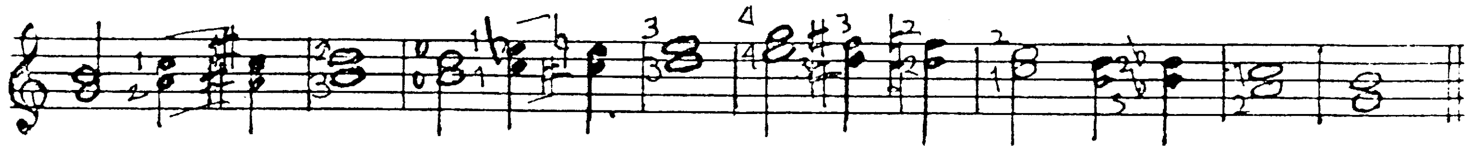


On a few occasions, the fifth string,or "chanticlear" as it is sometimes called,is fingered. These rare occasions are used to gain a special effect, or to enlarge a chord or make it simple to finger. Such instances will always be edited. Just remember that the fifth string open, is the same as the note fingered at the fifth fret of the first string. Therefore, when you finger both the fifth and first strings at the seventh fret, you will get a unison of A, etc.

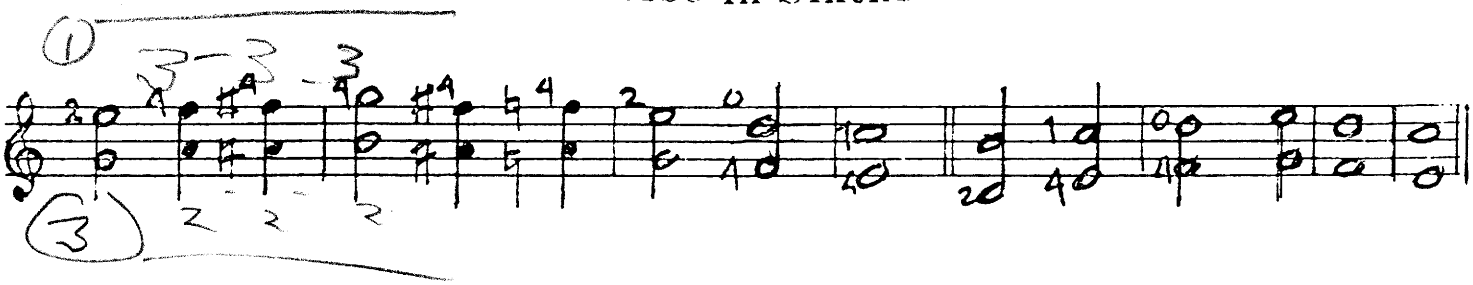
SHARPS AND FLATS ON THE THIRD STRING

ENHARMONICS

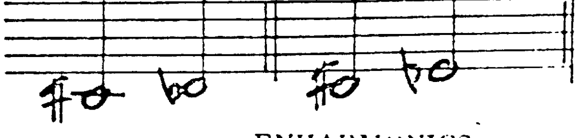
Exercise in Thirds



Exercise in Sixths

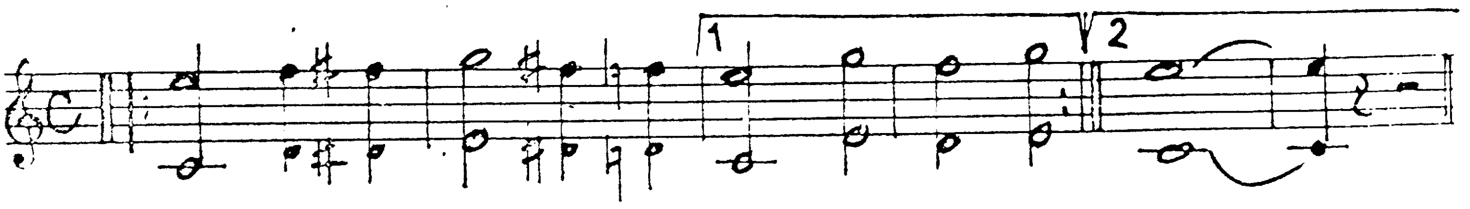


SHARPS AND FLATS ON THE FOURTH STRING



ENHARMONICS

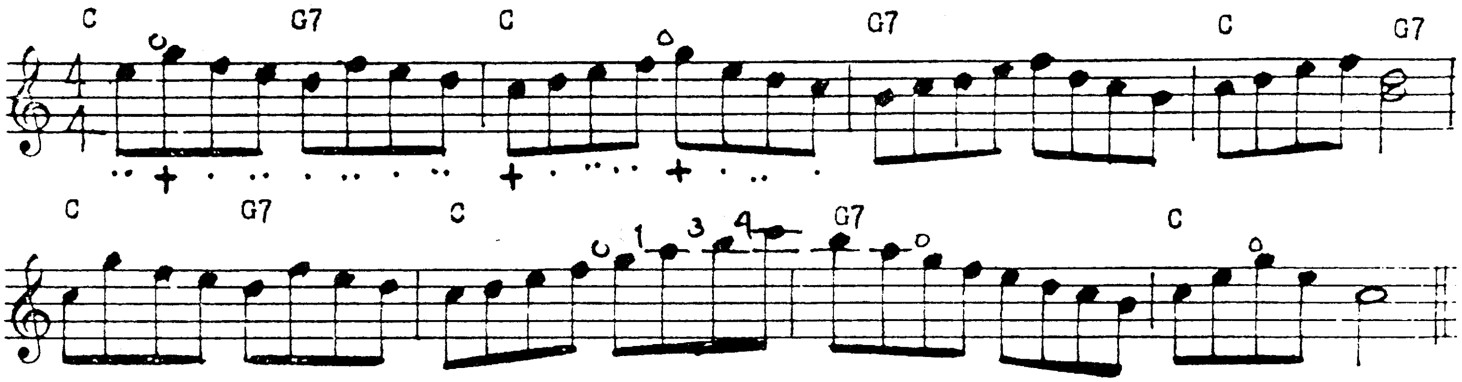
Exercise In Tenths

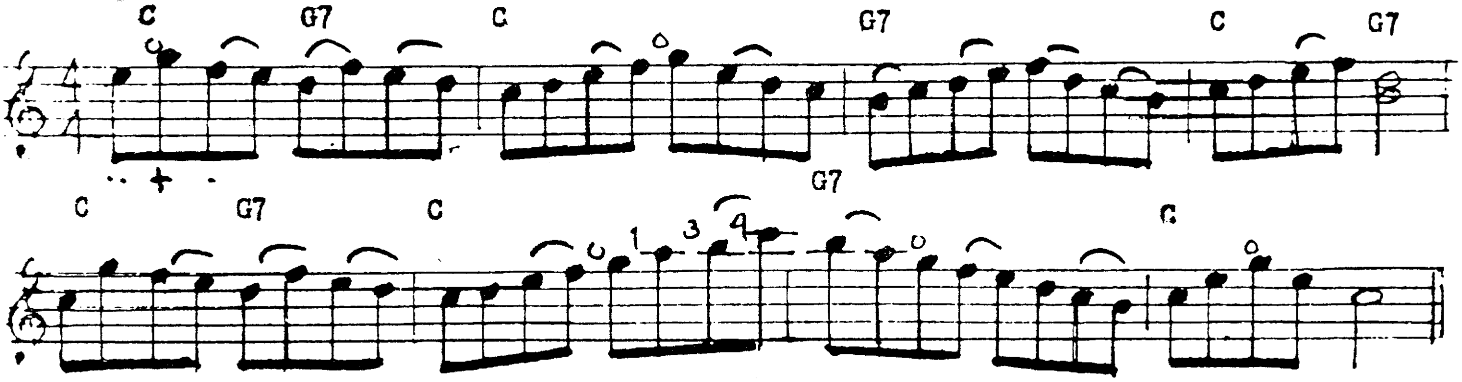


Finger Exercises

For rhythmic practise and the development of facility

Since we have now learned the two octave scale of C major, as well as the extension example, together with various rhythm patterns, slurs etc., it is time that we begin to build up a rapid technique. The following example is from the famous Czerny studies for the piano, and fits the banjo like a glove. After practicing this study with the right hand fingering indicated, try the one after it, using the slurs previously learned. The observing student will notice how helpful the slurs are in increasing velocity.





AUTHOR'S NOTE

The cost of publishing any type of book today is staggering. For this reason, any experienced writer will try to pick out only the most useful materials. Since the piano has probably had more music written for it than other instruments, the ambitious student should do a little research on his own into the works of the great technical writers such as Czerny, Wellenhaupt, Loosehorn, Hanon and others. Read the right hand parts of these studies and attempt to make them fit the banjo.

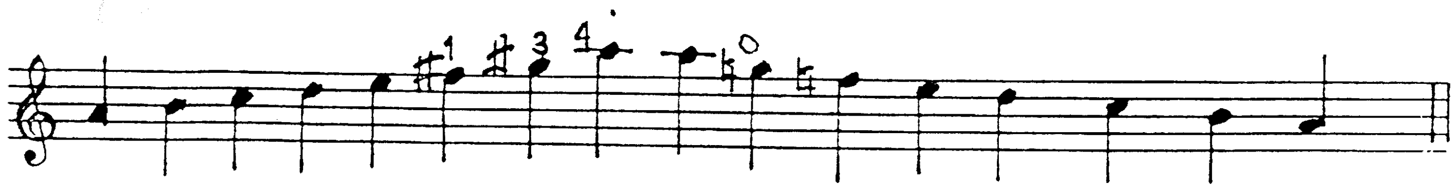
The student by now should have a fairly good groundwork in the key of C, and it is high time that we move into the other keys, beginning with the relative minor key which is shown on the next page.

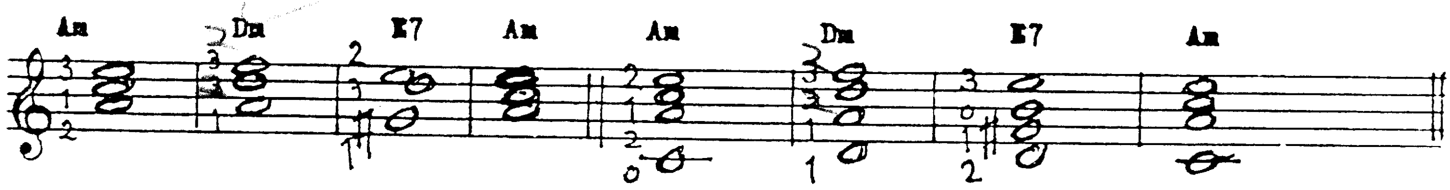
The Minor Keys

Every major key has a relative minor whose key note (starting note or tonic) is found on the sixth tone of the major scale. In a like manner, this starting note may be three notes below the key note of the major scale. The two keys are said to be "relative" because they use the same signature.

The latter rule often confuses the novice musician. He will invariably ask, "if both keys use the same signature, how can you tell them apart"? The answer is, "look at the last note of the piece. If it ends on the major key note, it is major, if it ends on its relative minor, it is minor".

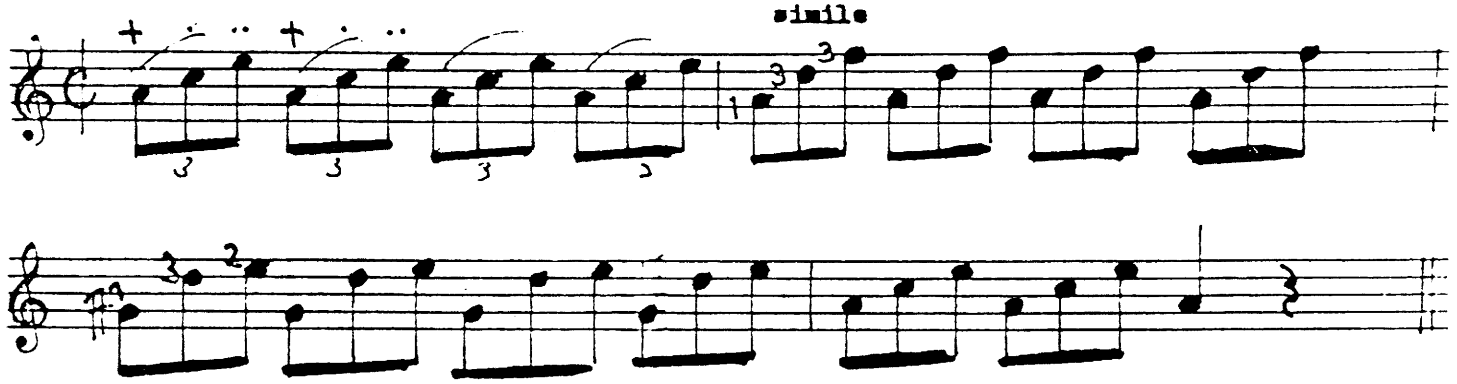
The following scale of A minor is in the so-called "melodic" form in which the sixth and seventh tones are raised a half step in ascending, and restored in descending.





The first set of chords shown above are the three string variety which are most generally used in solo work. The second set may be played with either guitar fingering, in which the third finger of the right hand, which we have not used so far, picks the first string, while the second finger picks the second string, the third finger the third, and the thumb the fourth. The four string chords may also be strummed by the thumb alone, or by the so called "drum slide" in which the fingernails of the right hand brush across all of the four strings.

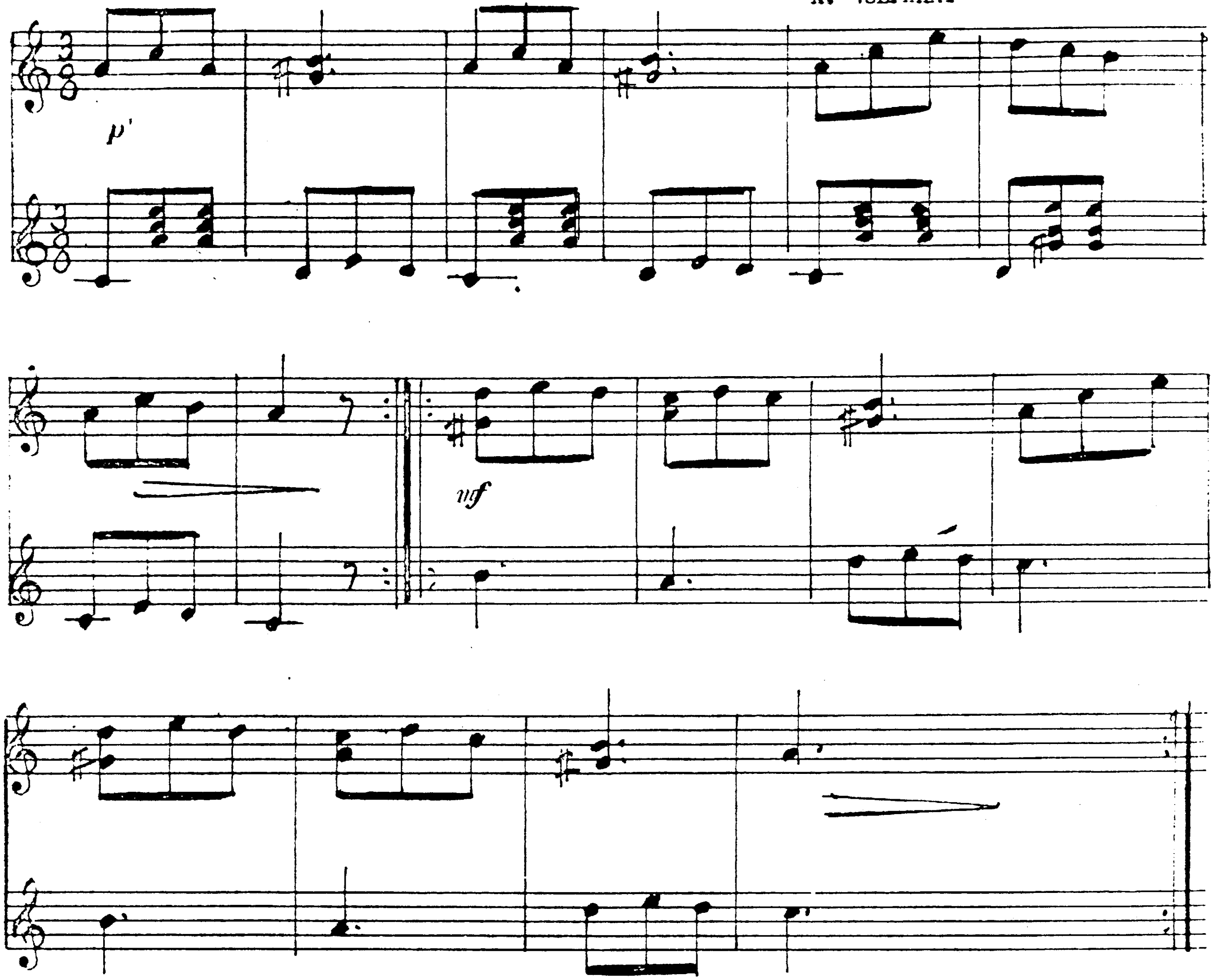
Arpeggios



Waltz

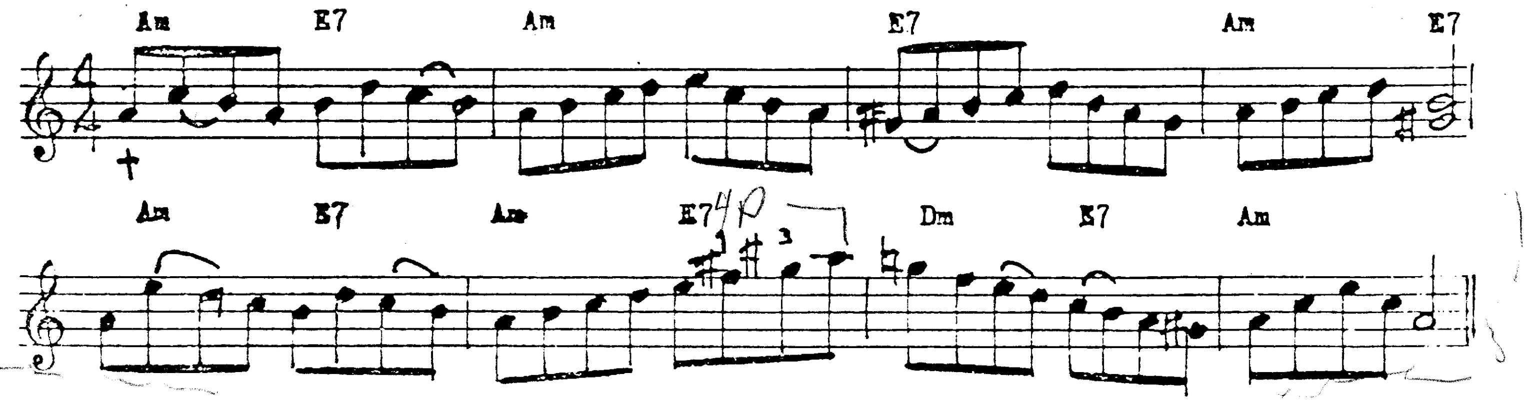
Introducing three-eight time which has the eighth note for the beat. Such waltzes are featured in ballet music, as opposed to the more stately three-four ballroom waltz. The composer was a noted piano pedagogue.

M. WOLFAHRT



Carefully practice the slurs in this study.

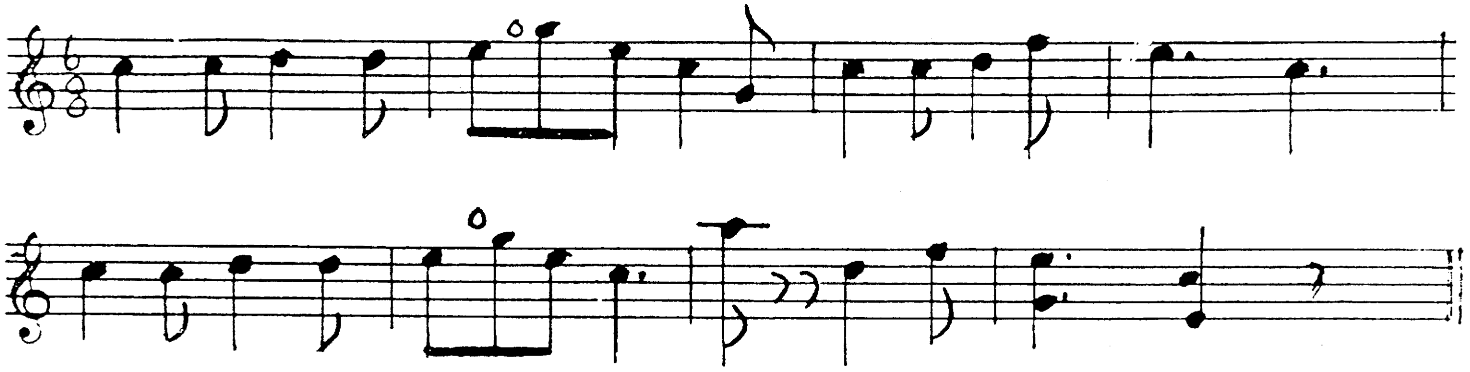
Etude



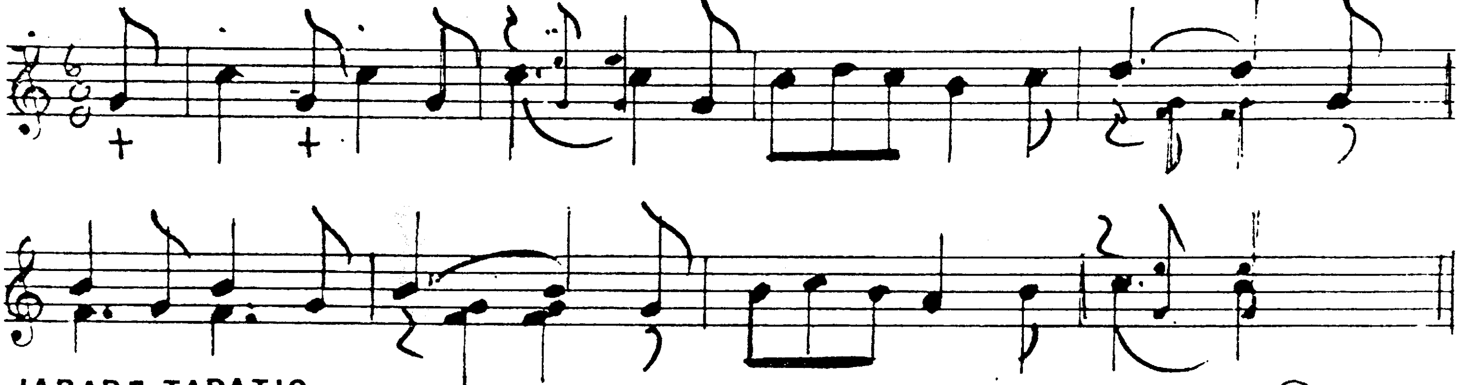
Six Eight Time

Six-eight, or compound time, is used constantly in marches and various ethnic dances such as the Jarabe Tapatio (Mexican hat dance) the Italian Tarentella as well as the ancient Gigue of Bach's time. In counting the time, we must remember that every triplet or its equivalent has one beat. Never a single note other than a dotted quarter. If you try to count it as six beats to the measure, and do it rapidly, you will be tongue-tied before the end of the first line. Study the following exercises very carefully.

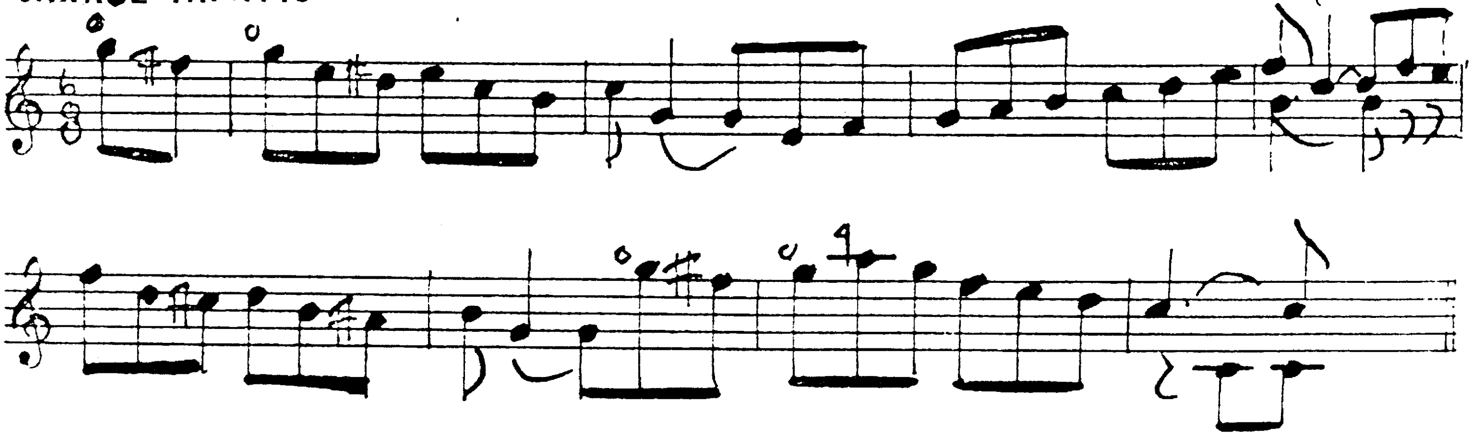
POP GOES THE WEASEL



LA RASPA



JARABE TAPATIO



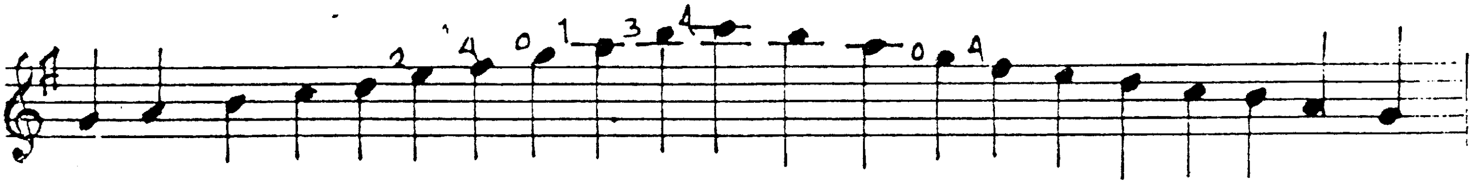
Many serenades and other similar-type slow pieces are also written in six-eight time. In such an instance, we do count each eighth note as one beat.

A conductor beating fast six-eight time brings his baton down on the count of one, and up on two. However, in slow six-eight time, he beats down on the count of one, a half-circle to the left on two, another half circle on three, and then three half-circles to the right for the fourth, fifth and sixth beats.

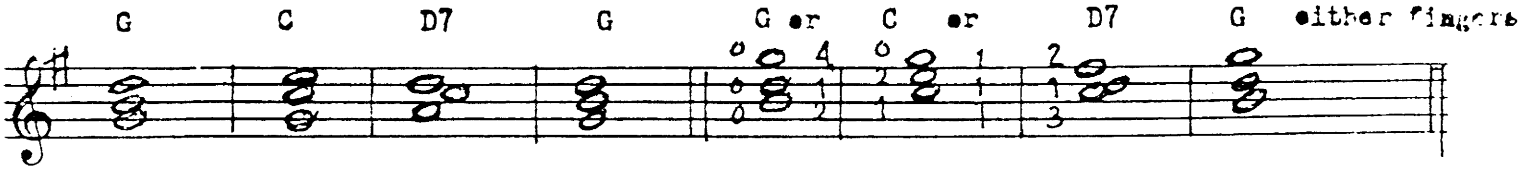
Keyof G Major

In the key of G major, the sharp on the fifth line of the staff reminds us that every time we encounter the note F, whether high, low or medium it must be played one fret higher than usual.

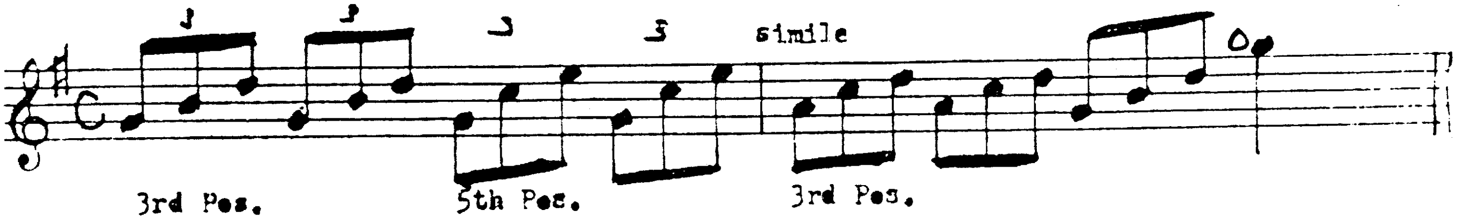
The following scale has been extended so that the range is an octave and a fourth. When the first finger reaches A on the seventh fret, it must be retained. This establishes what is known as the SEVENTH POSITION. Any position on the banjo is identified by the fret upon which the first finger of the left hand is placed. Thus the first finger on the fifth fret is the FIFTH POSITION, etc.

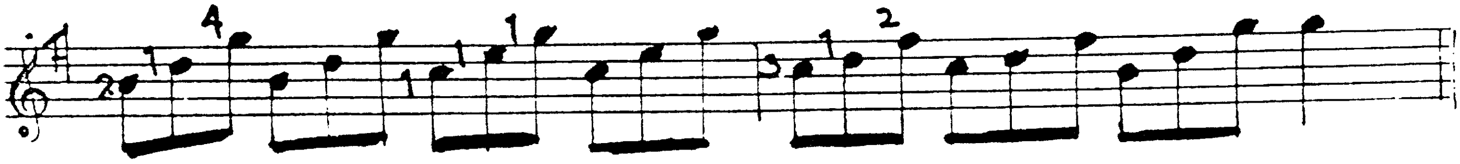


CHORDS IN THE KEY OF G MAJOR.

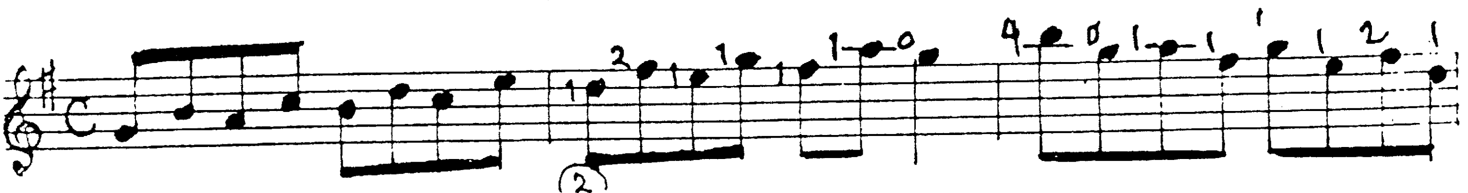


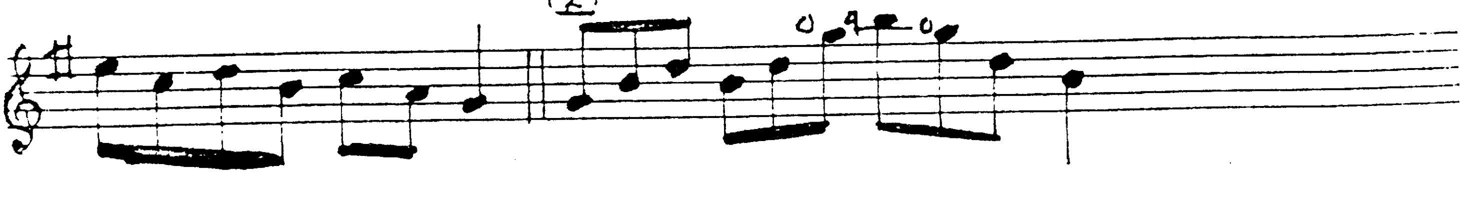
Broken Chords





ETUDE.

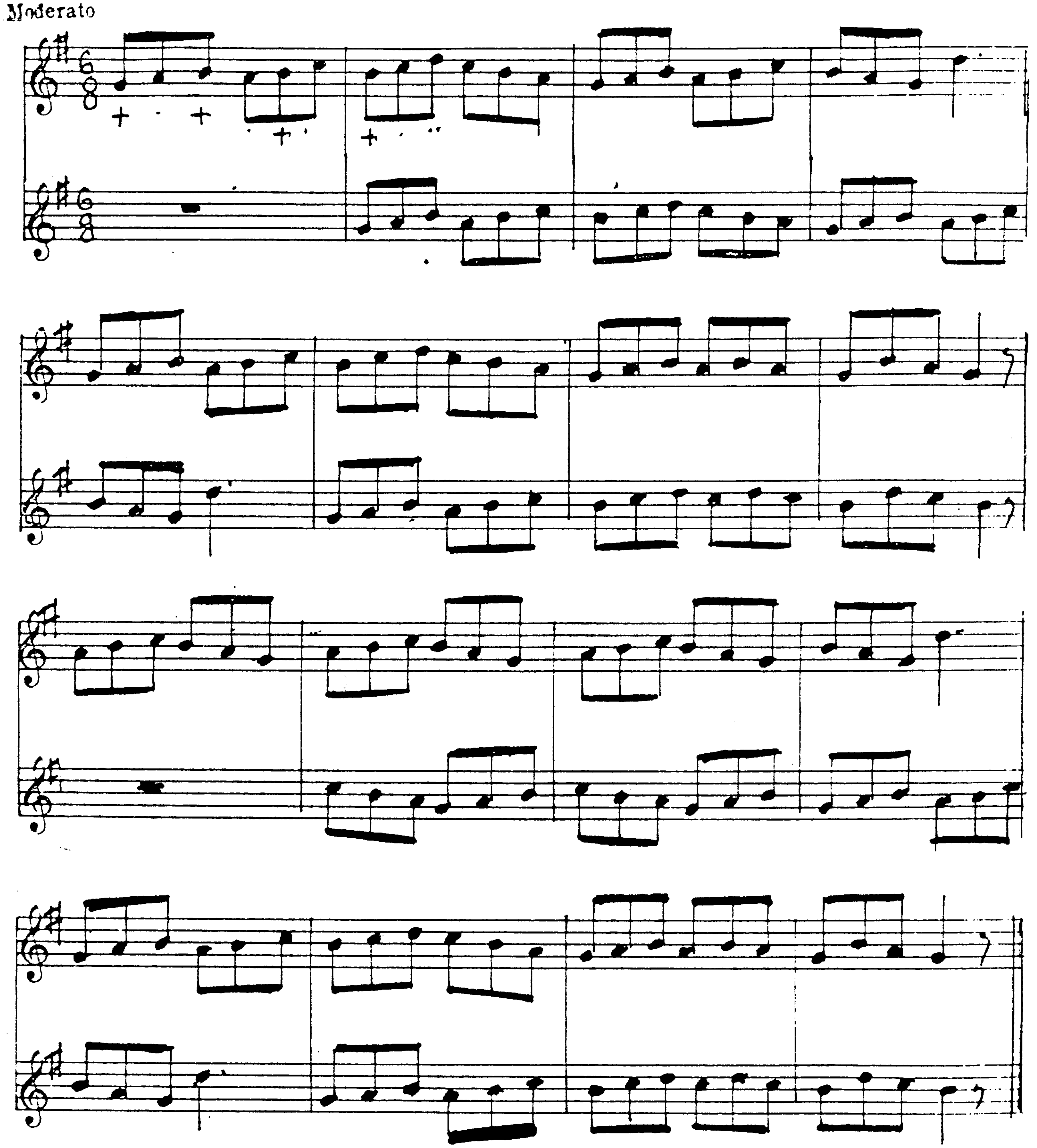




HIDE AND SEEK

CORNELIUS GURLITT

This delightful little tune is by one of the foremost piano pedagogues of the nineteenth century. It introduces what is known as "canon", a musical device in which the melody played by one voice, is immediately answered by another. It is also known as "imitation".



Remember, the student should learn both parts, and whenever possible, record one part on his tape recorder, and practice the other part with it.

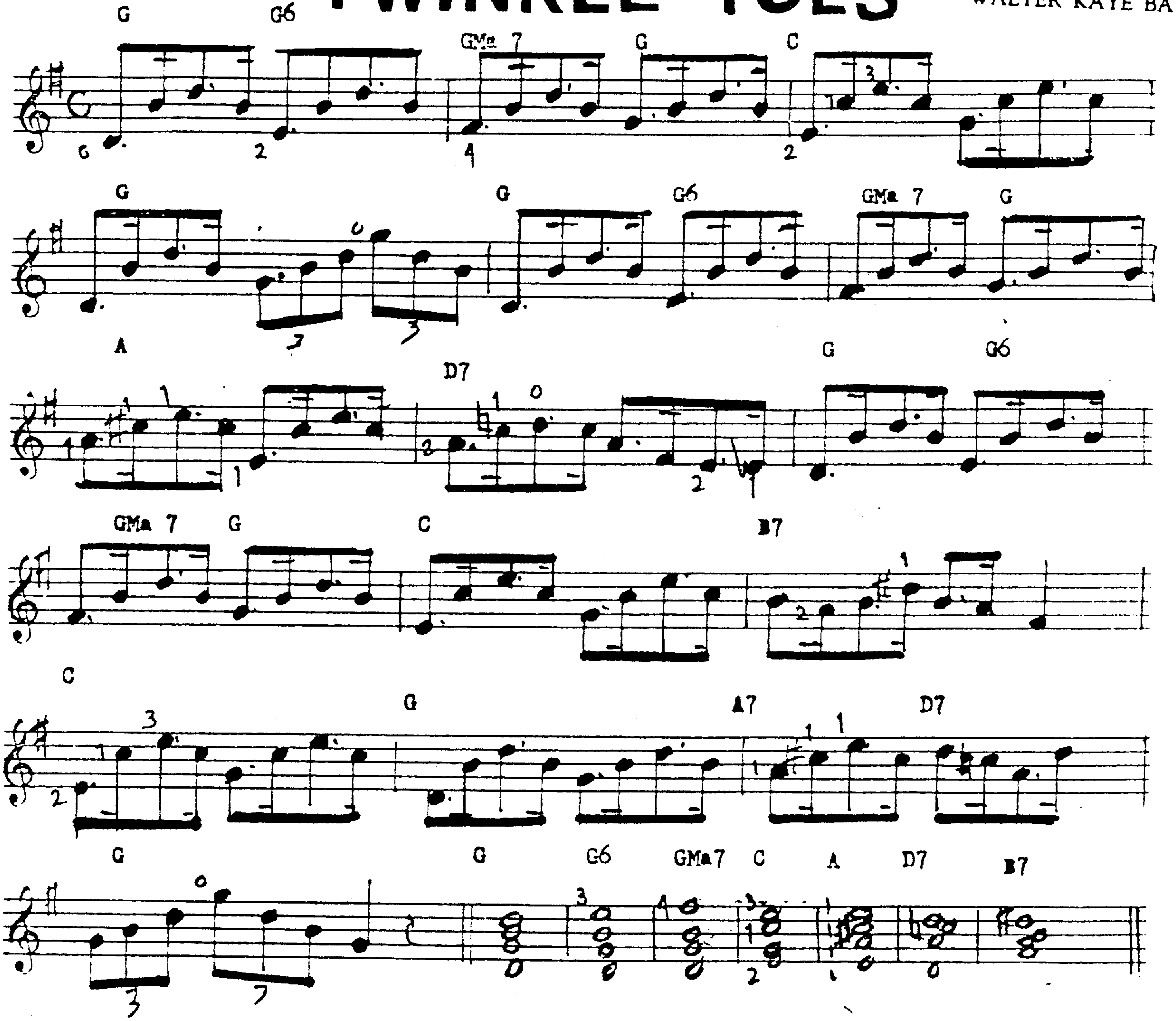
Like the classical guitar, many pieces written for the banjo sometimes requires a change in tuning of the bass string to facilitate a better technique, and to make certain chords more playable. Most blue-grass items are invariably in the so-called "bass to D" tuning.

The teacher should persist in training the students' ear to recognize the sound of the octave difference between the first string, and the elevated fourth.

The following **delightful** tune will give the student sufficient practice for the more difficult pieces published in this tuning. The student must realize that the notes on the fourth string (in this tuning) are the same as on the first.

TWINKLE TOES

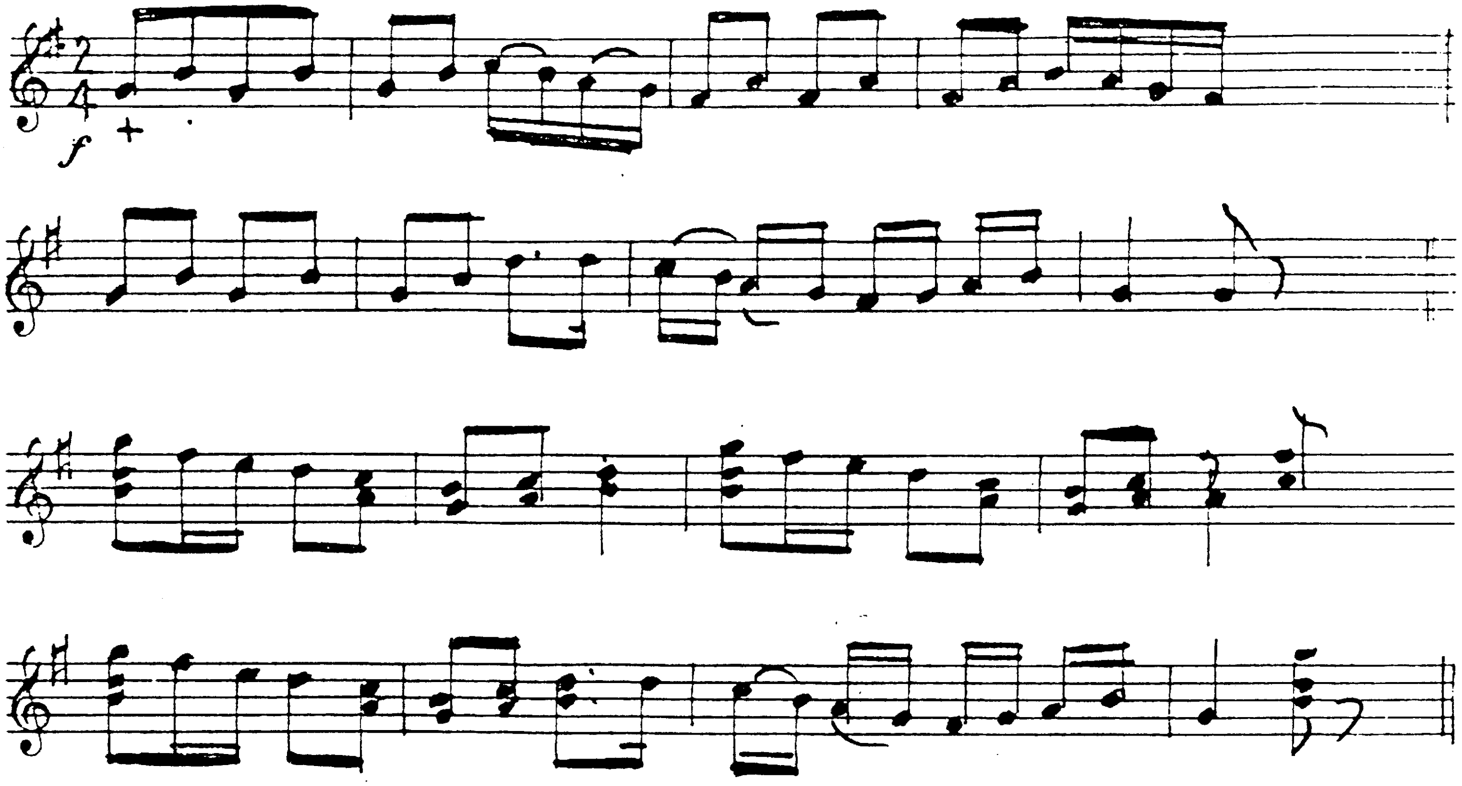
WALTER KAYE BAUER



CHORDS WITH ELEVATED BASS. These may be used to accompany Twinkle Toes if desired.

THE RAKES OF MALLOW

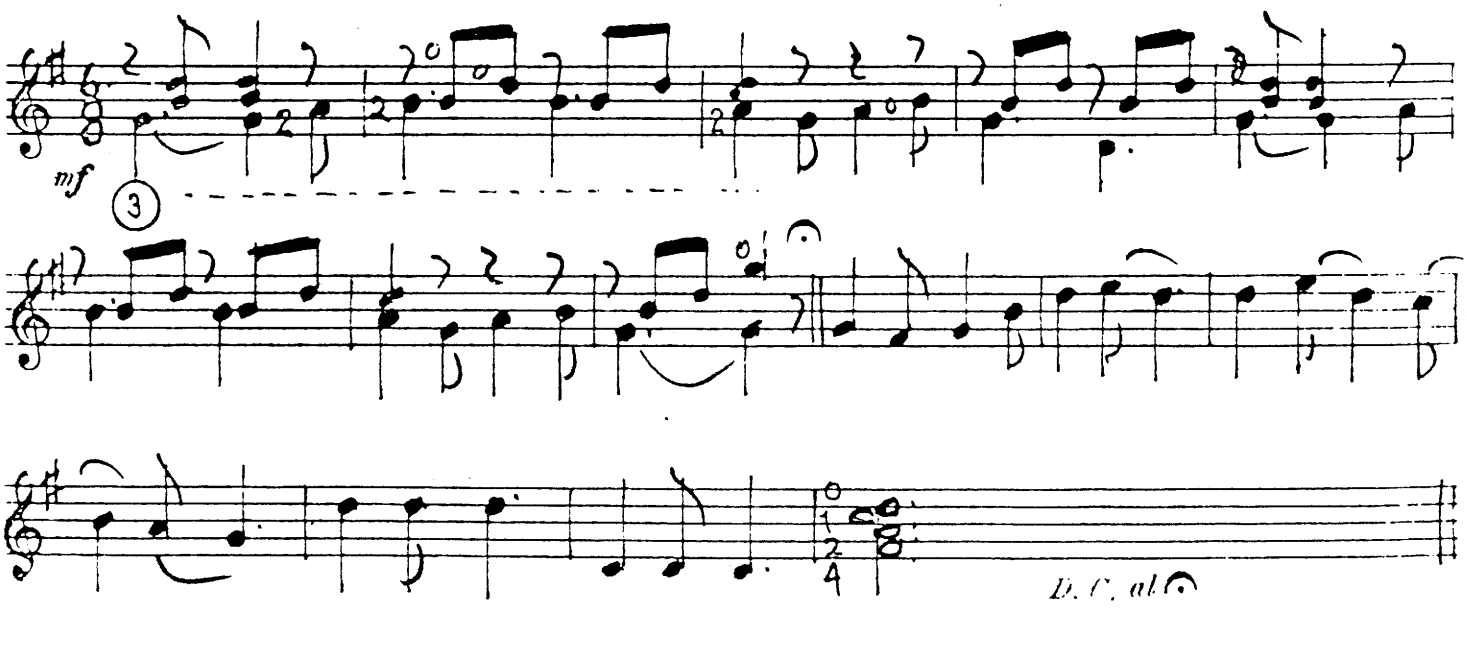
Bass to D



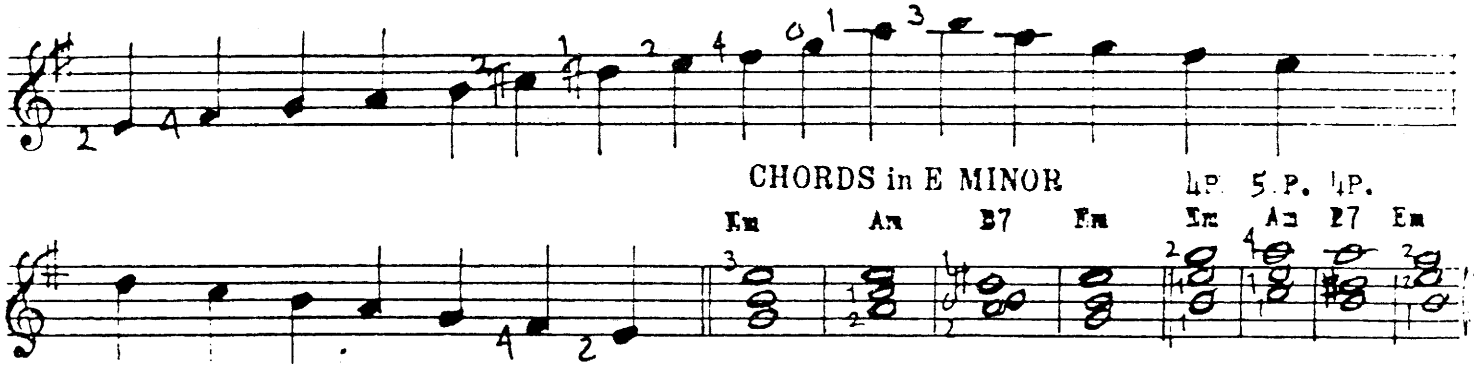
Bass to D

Alouette

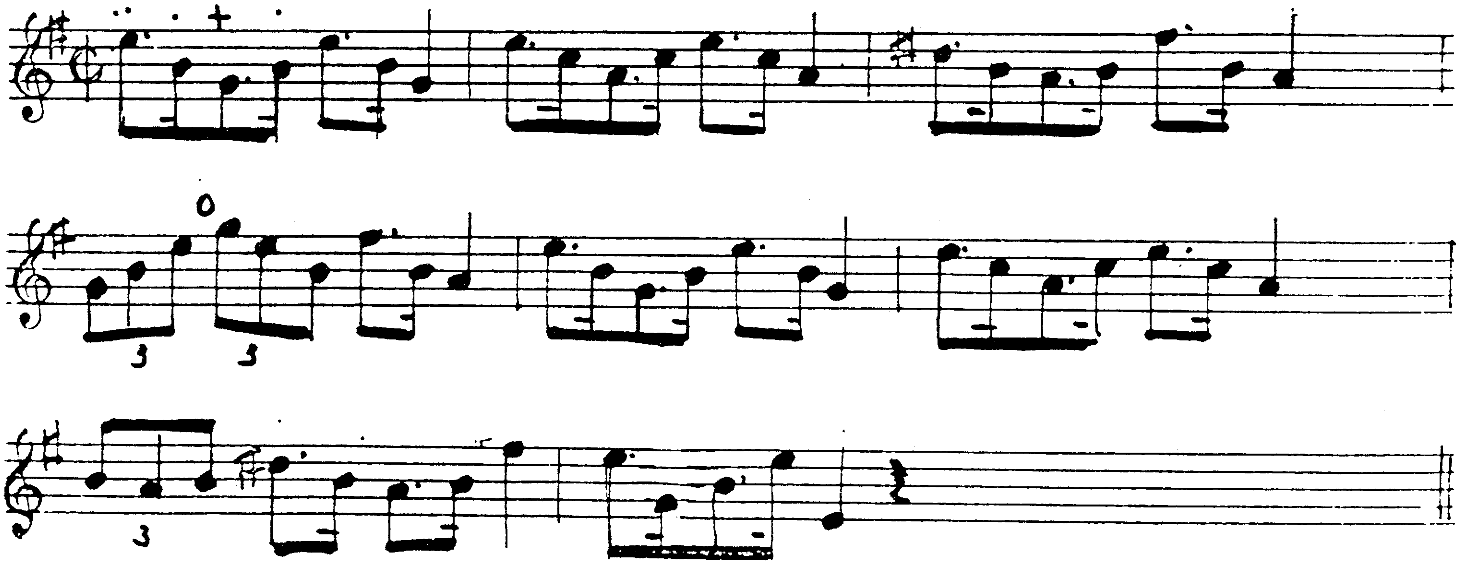
In this comical French-Canadian folk song, the melody stays on the third string a great deal. In the second measure, the melody note is immediately followed by its unison (same note), but on the second open string. A rolicking effect is thus created which is so prevalent in blue grass music.



Scale in E Minor
(relative to G Major)



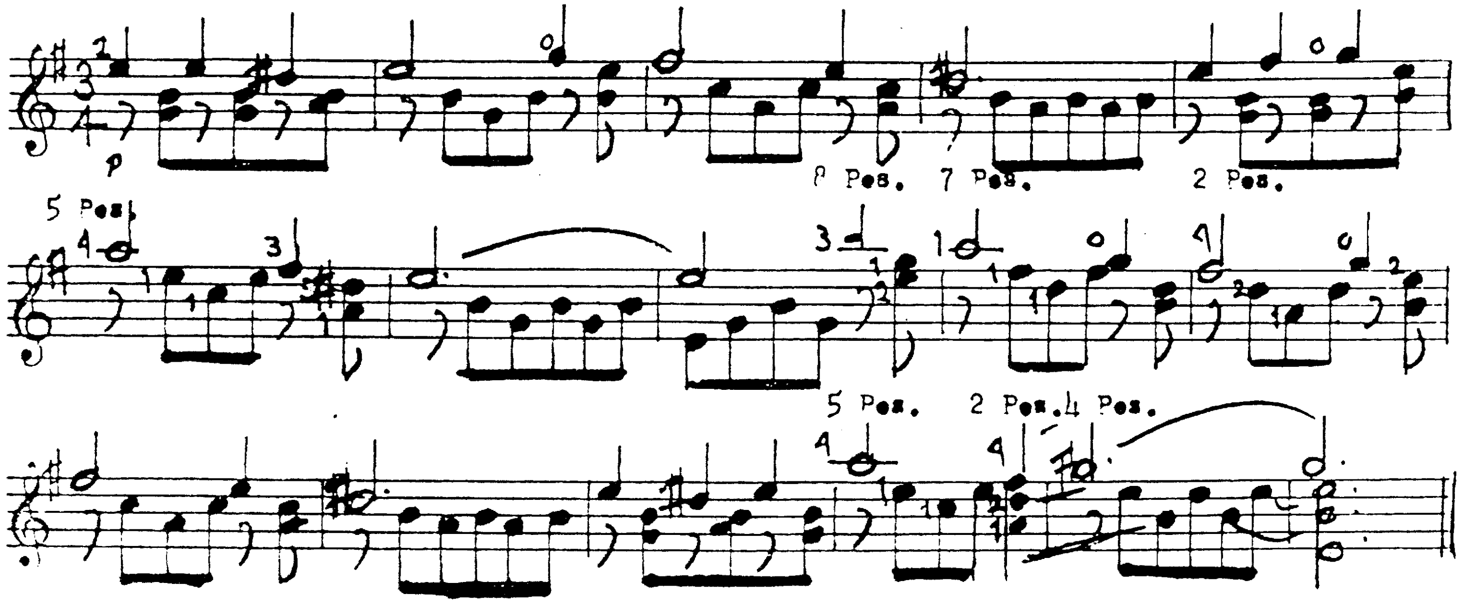
Dressage



THE COVENTRY CAROL

English Carol

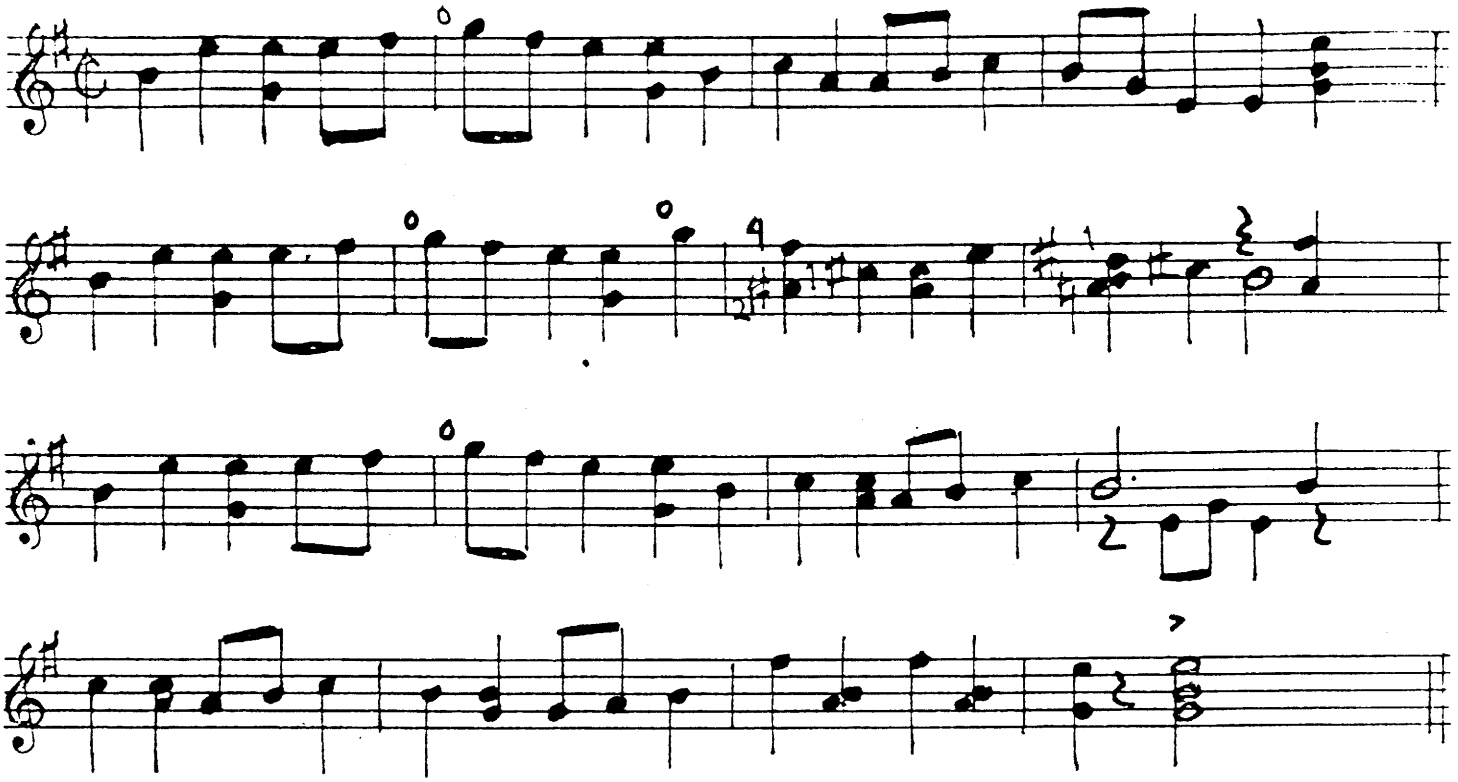
Moderately, with a lilt



Tom-Tom

Either tuning

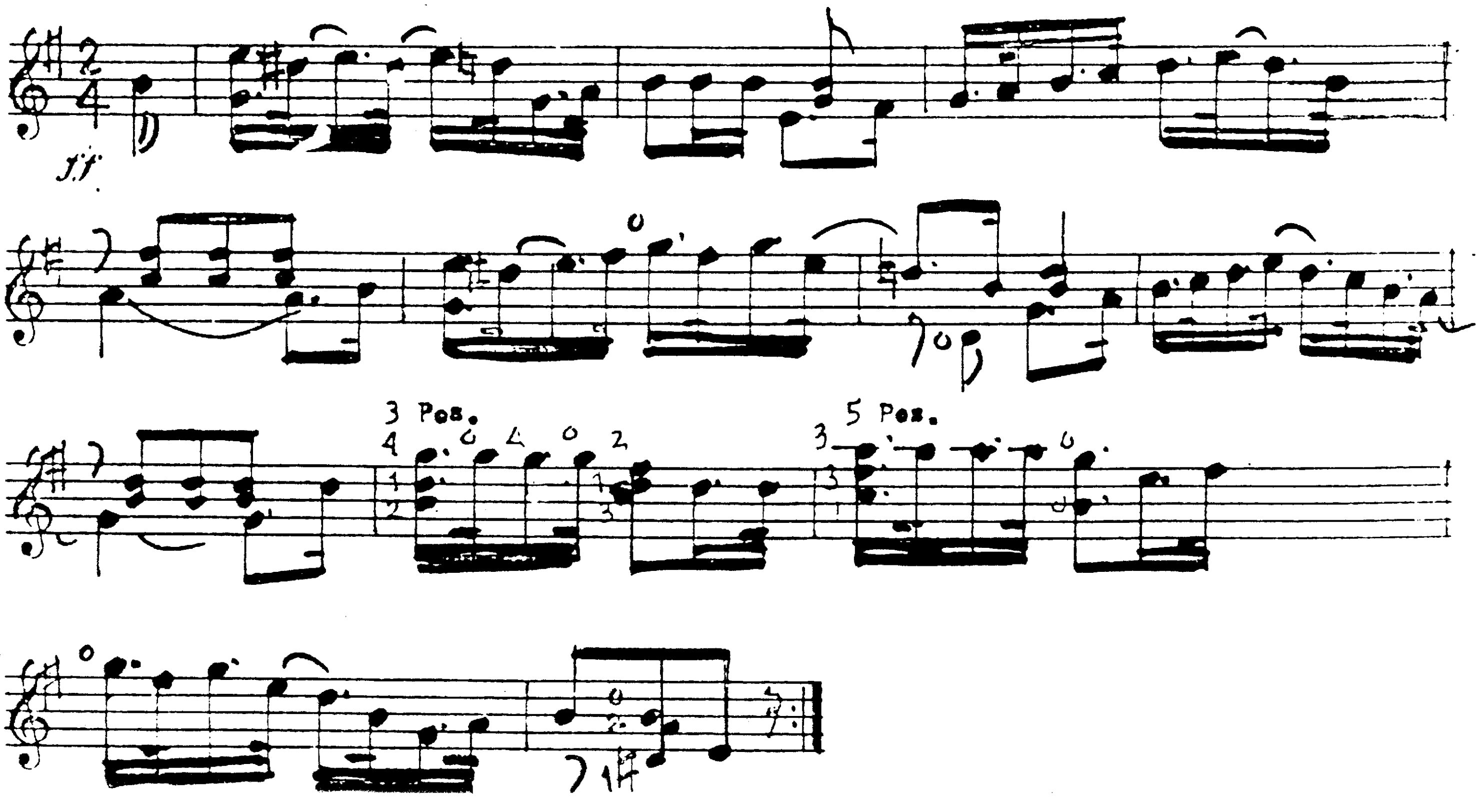
WALTER KAYE BAUER



Pinafore.

Bass to D

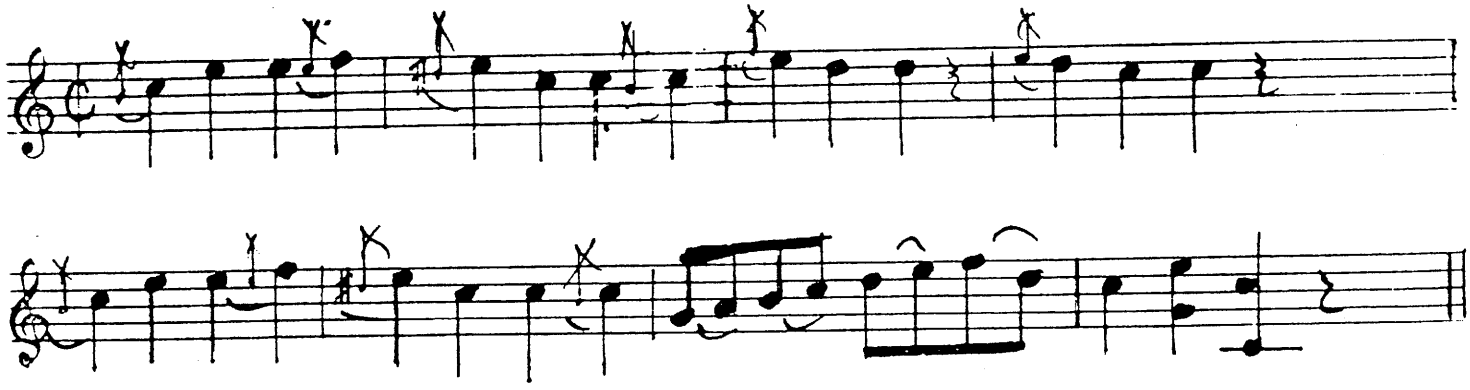
Straight Jig



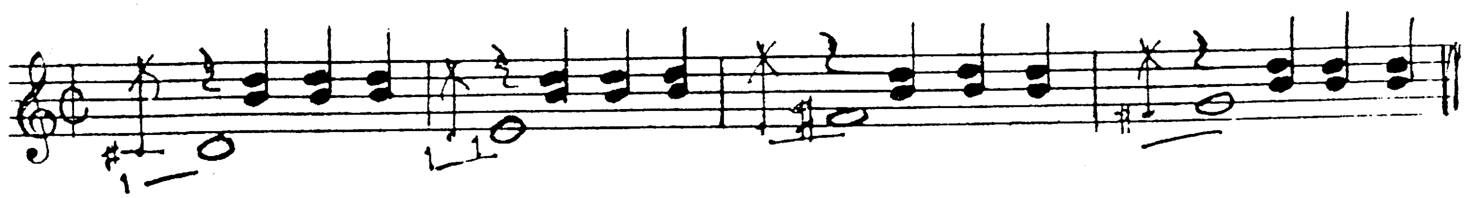
Grace Notes

A grace note in music is portrayed as a very small note, which precedes the principal note and robs it of a minute portion of its value. We shall deal only with the short grace note or Acciacatura as it is called. This may always be identified by the diagonal line through its stem. The appogiatura, or long grace note, steals half the value of the note, and goes back to the time of the early classical composers.

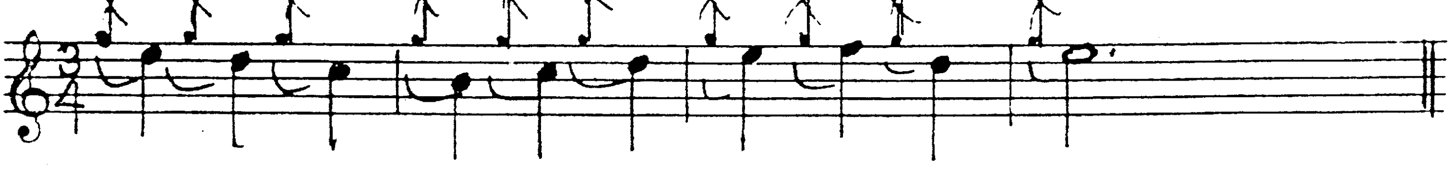
Grace notes are executed in the same manner as the slurs, but much more quickly. In the first two measures of the following example, the ascending slur is used. The action of the fingers should make the finished effect sound like the word "bizarre". The third and fourth measures require the use of the descending slur, or snap.



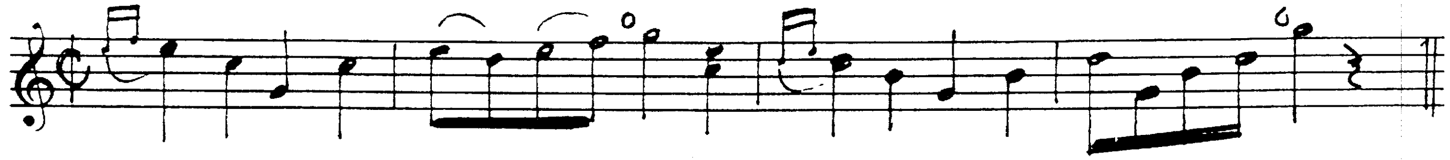
Our next example is a favorite with all banjo players. The slide is effected by playing the first note with the thumb and immediately sliding it to the next note without picking it again. The slide is generally played only on the fourth and third strings because they have more senority.



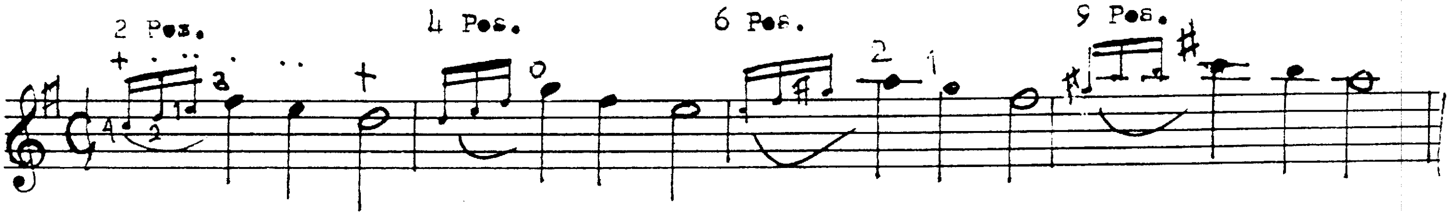
The grace note played from the open fifth string to any other open or fingered note is one of the characteristic features peculiar to the five string banjo alone. It is featured in many of the great works made famous by many of the departed virtuosi of the past. Give it a lot of time. It is well worth it.



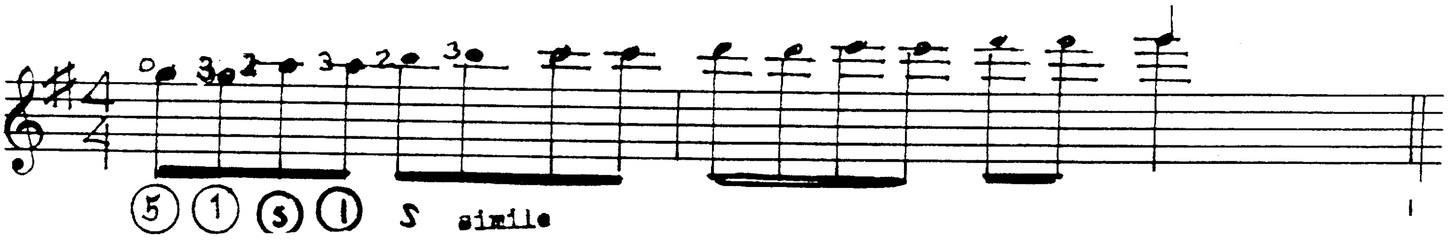
In playing the double grace notes shown below, we strike the first of the pair with the proper right hand finger. The succeeding left hand finger then drops quickly on to the second of the pair of grace notes.



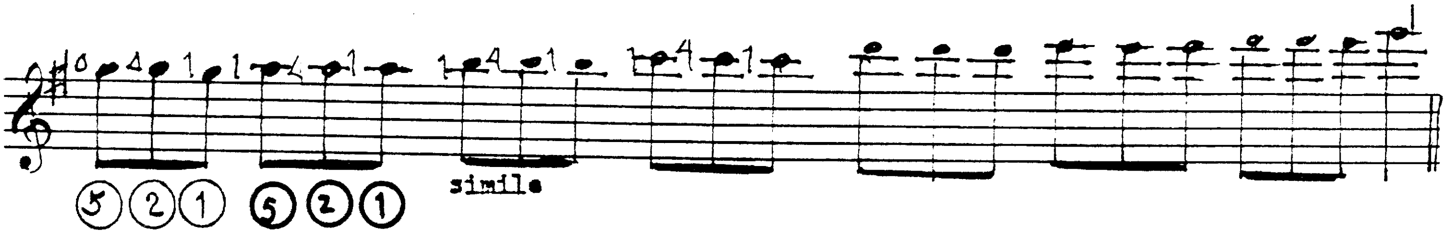
Our next example shows the best way of playing the triple grace note patterns. The first of the three grace notes is fingered on the third string, the second on the second string, and the third on the first string. In this way, the three notes may be performed very quickly, as called for.



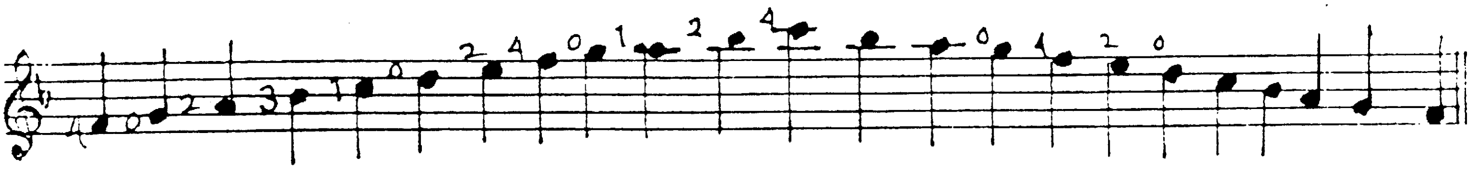
Another very fascinating feature on the five string banjo is the unison made by playing one note on the fifth string, and the other on the first. In the example below, the first note is the fifth open string, and the second is the fifth fret on the first string. We then bar the first finger across the entire finger-board to get the two "A"s, one on the fifth string, and the other on the first. Now just hold this position and move up to B on the 9th fret, C on the 10th, D on the 12th, E on the 14th, F# on the 16th, and G on the 17th. The stem up and down means to play both strings together on the last note. Next, play it descending in the same way.



In the next example in triplets, we finger the open fifth string, then the G on second string with the fourth finger and the G on the first with the first finger. Now by the use of the bar across the seventh fret, and with the little finger three frets higher on the second string, we can execute the same scale in triplets, just as we did the last example in eigth notes.

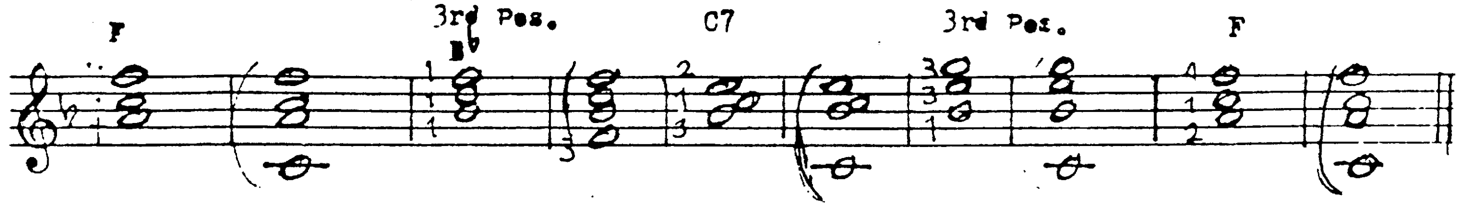


Scale in F Major

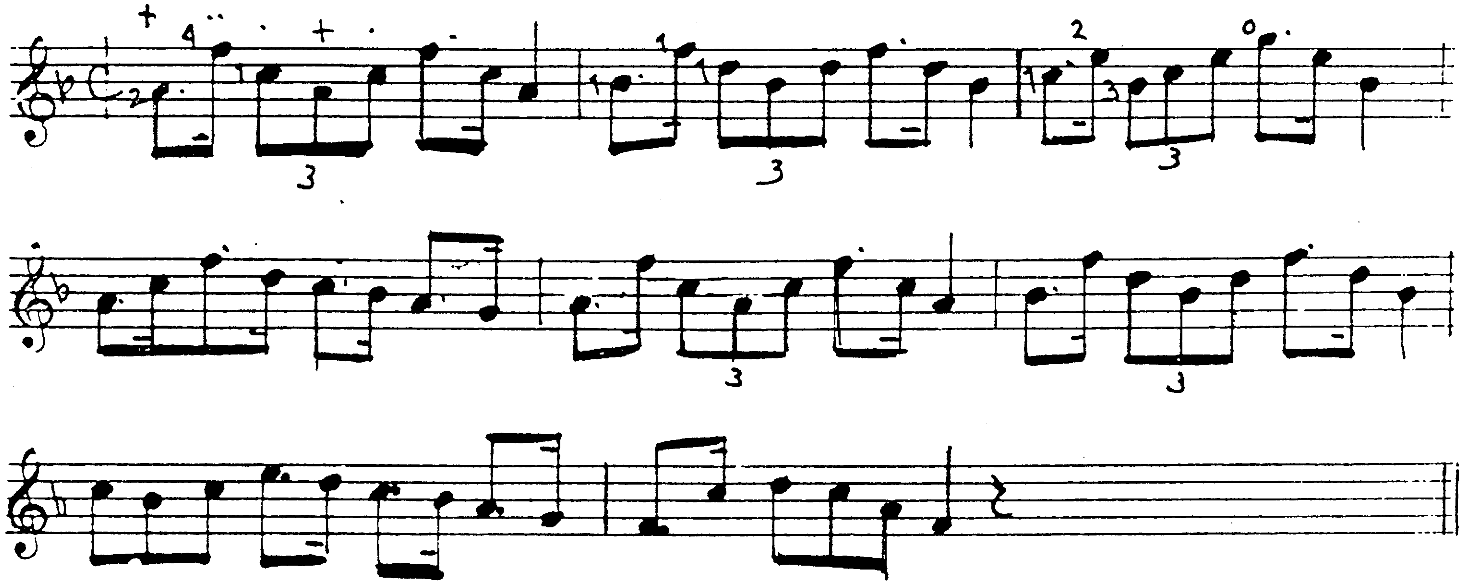


Chords in F Major

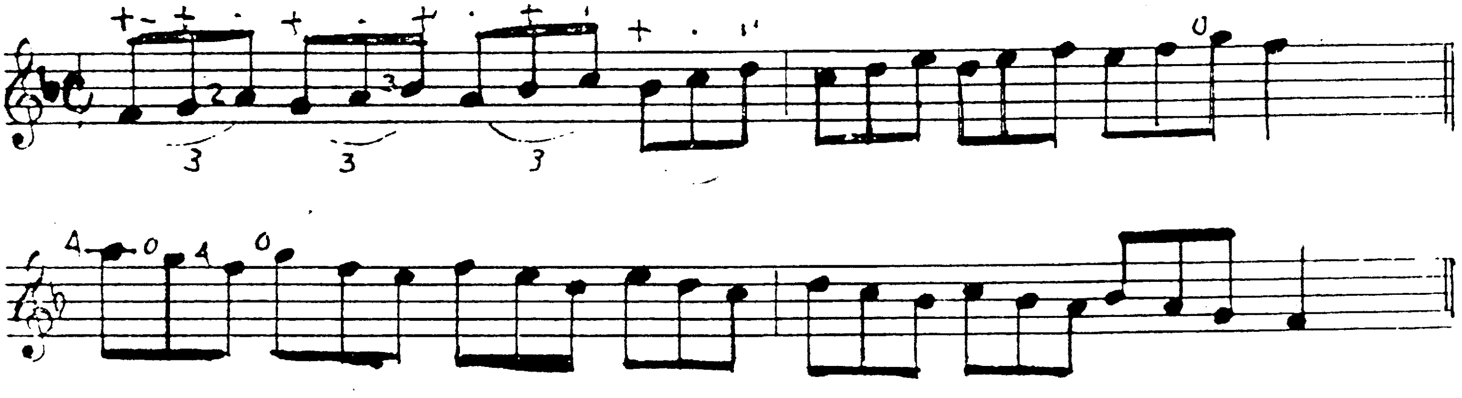
Shown in three and four string forms.



HAPPY HOUR

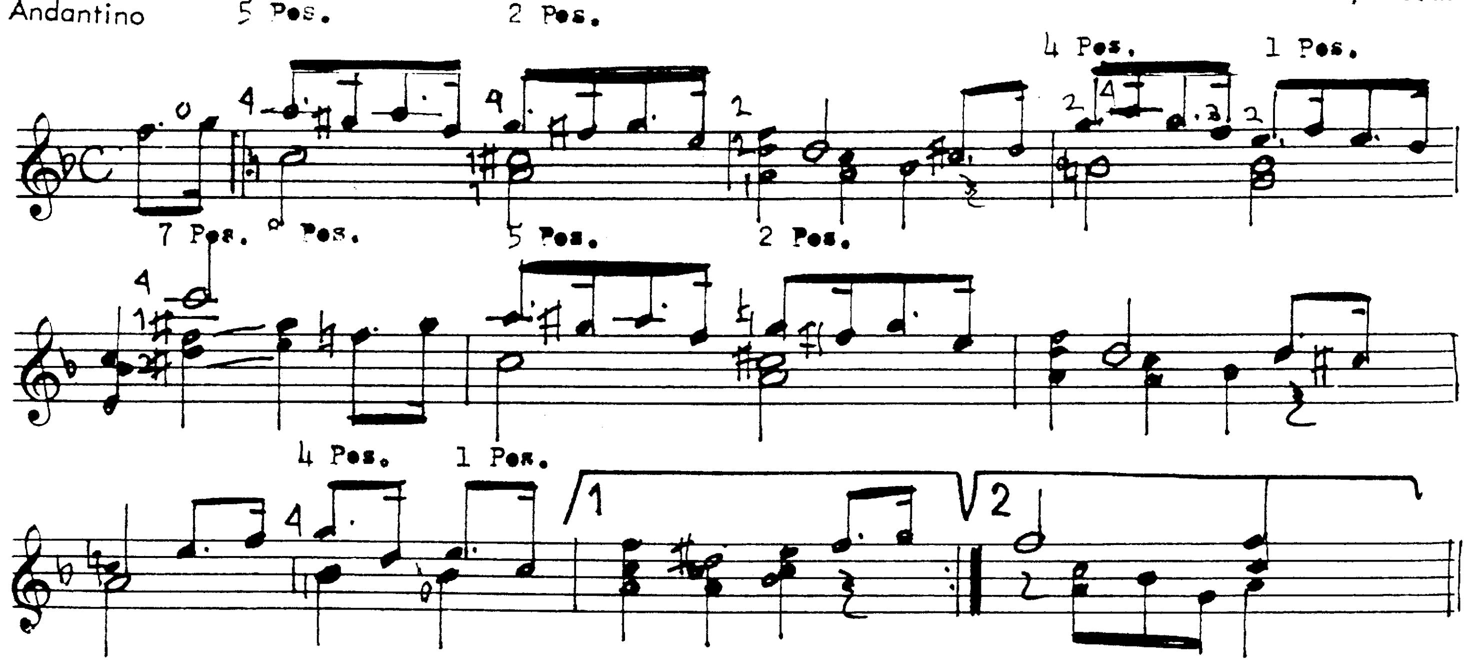


Speed



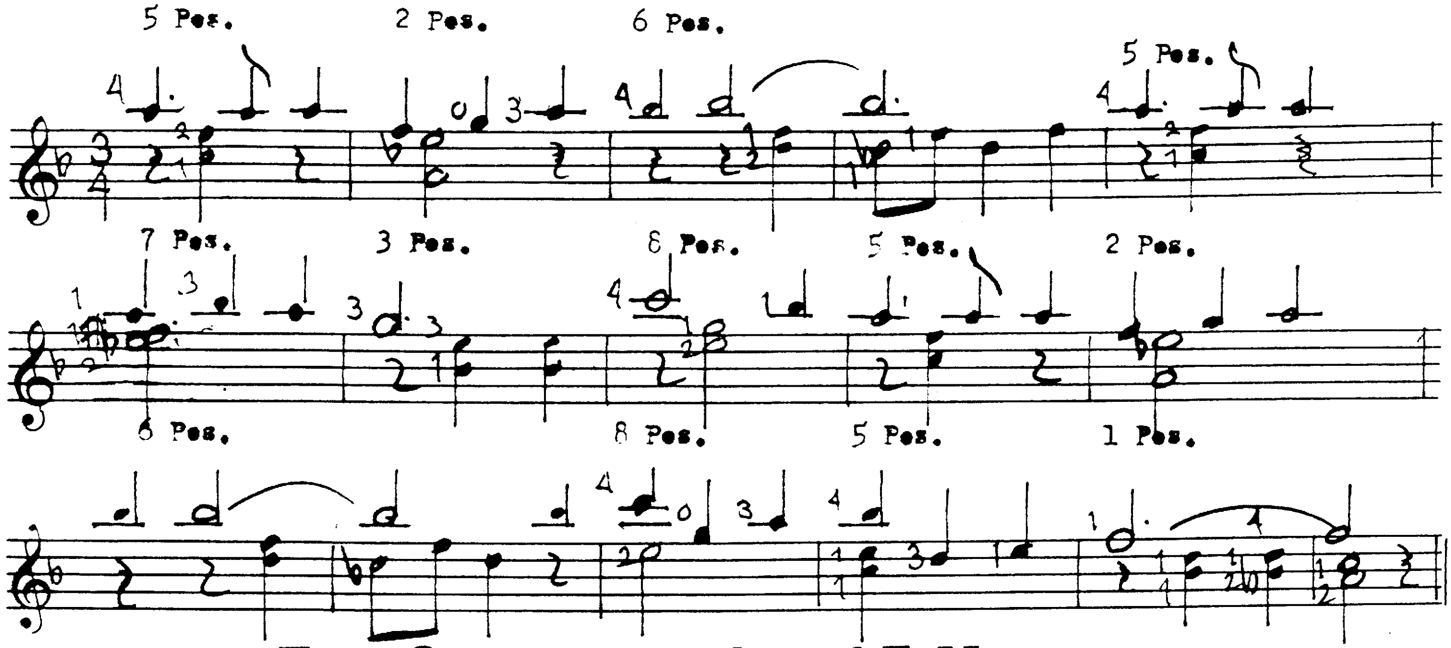
ON THE BANKS OF THE WABASH

PAUL-DRESSER

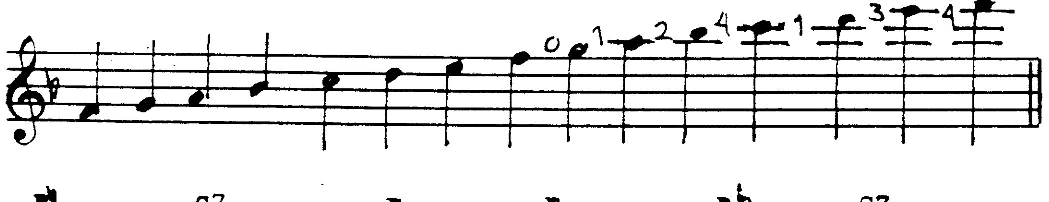


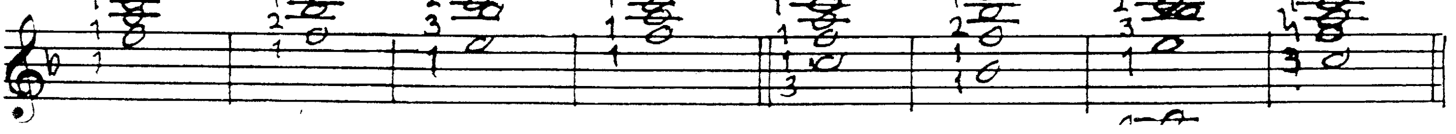
BEAUTIFUL BROWN EYES

TRAD

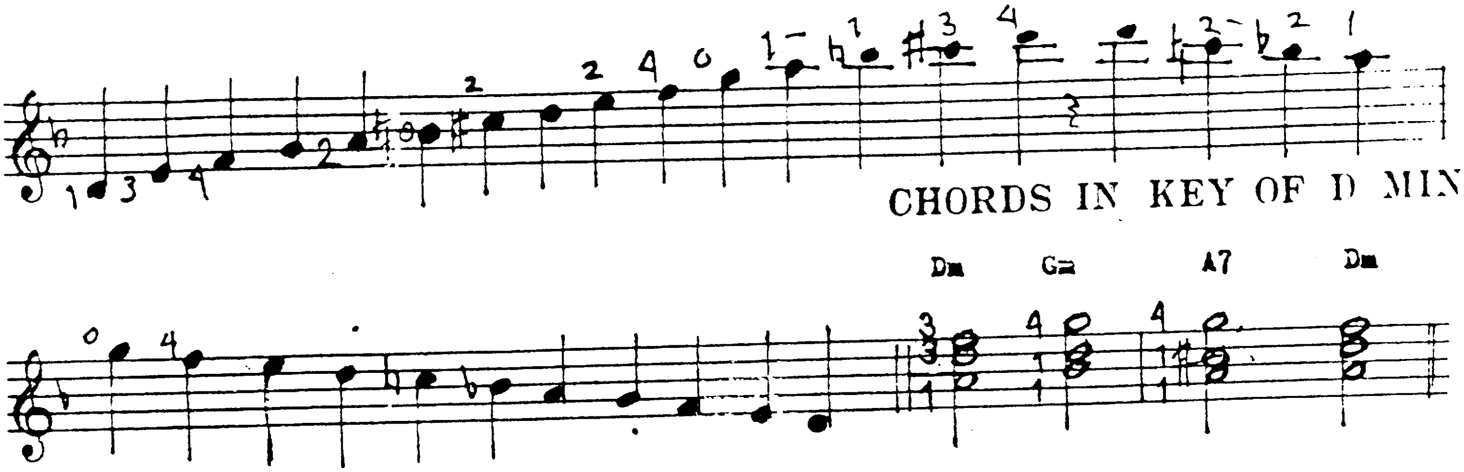


Two Octave Scale of F Major



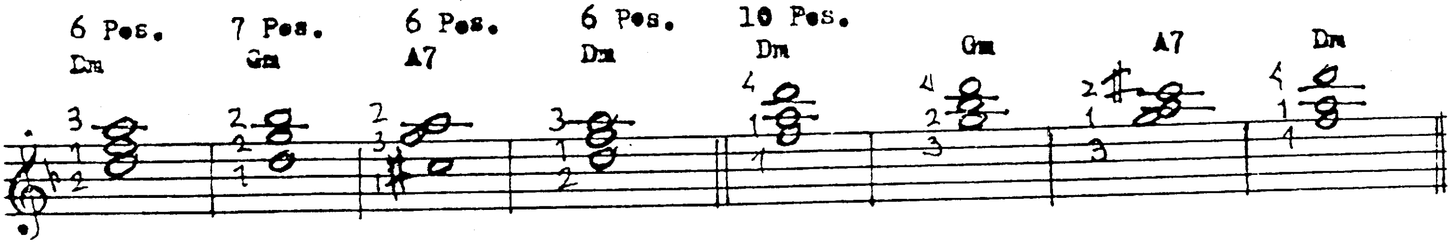


SCALE OF D MINOR, RELATIVE TO F MAJOR.



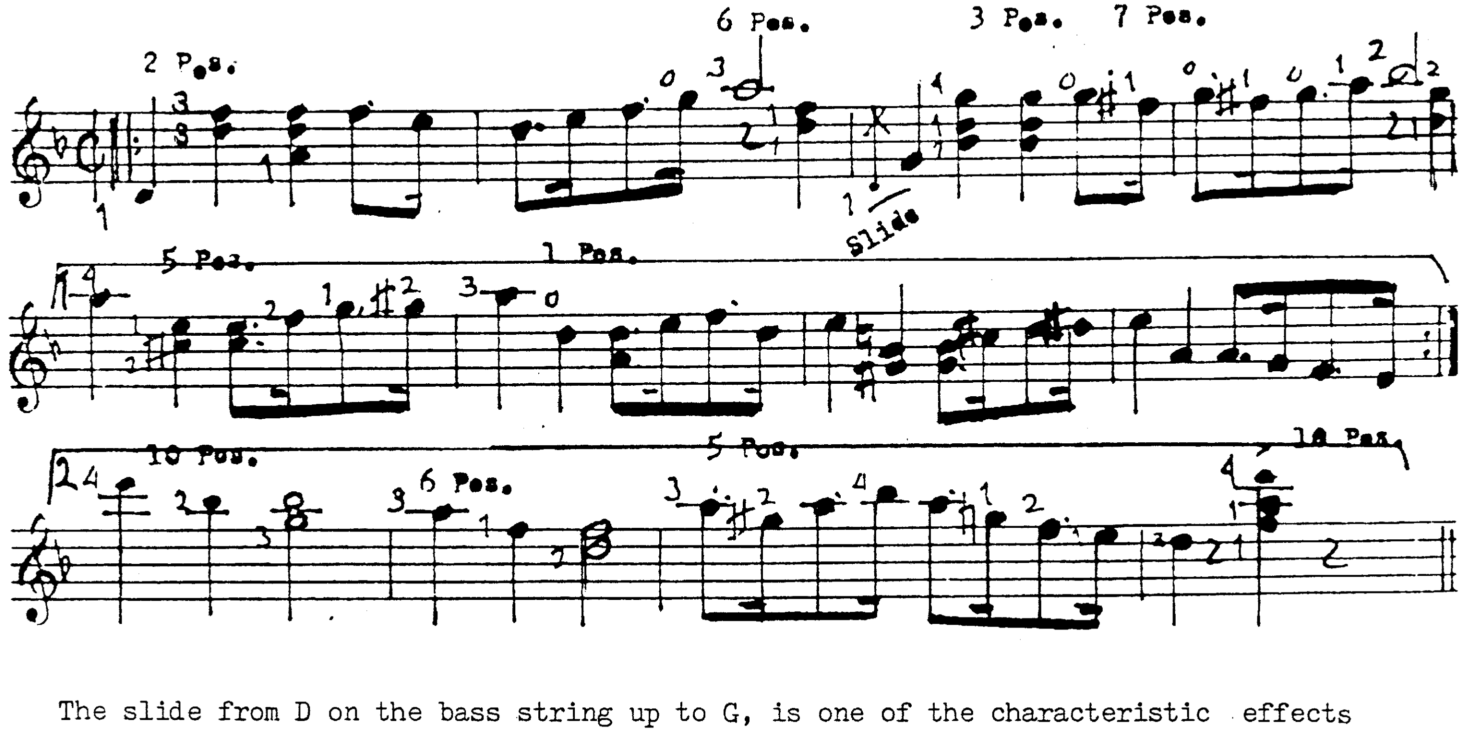
CHORDS IN KEY OF D MINOR

POSITION CHORDS IN D MINOR.



Clog Dance

WALTER KAYE BAUER



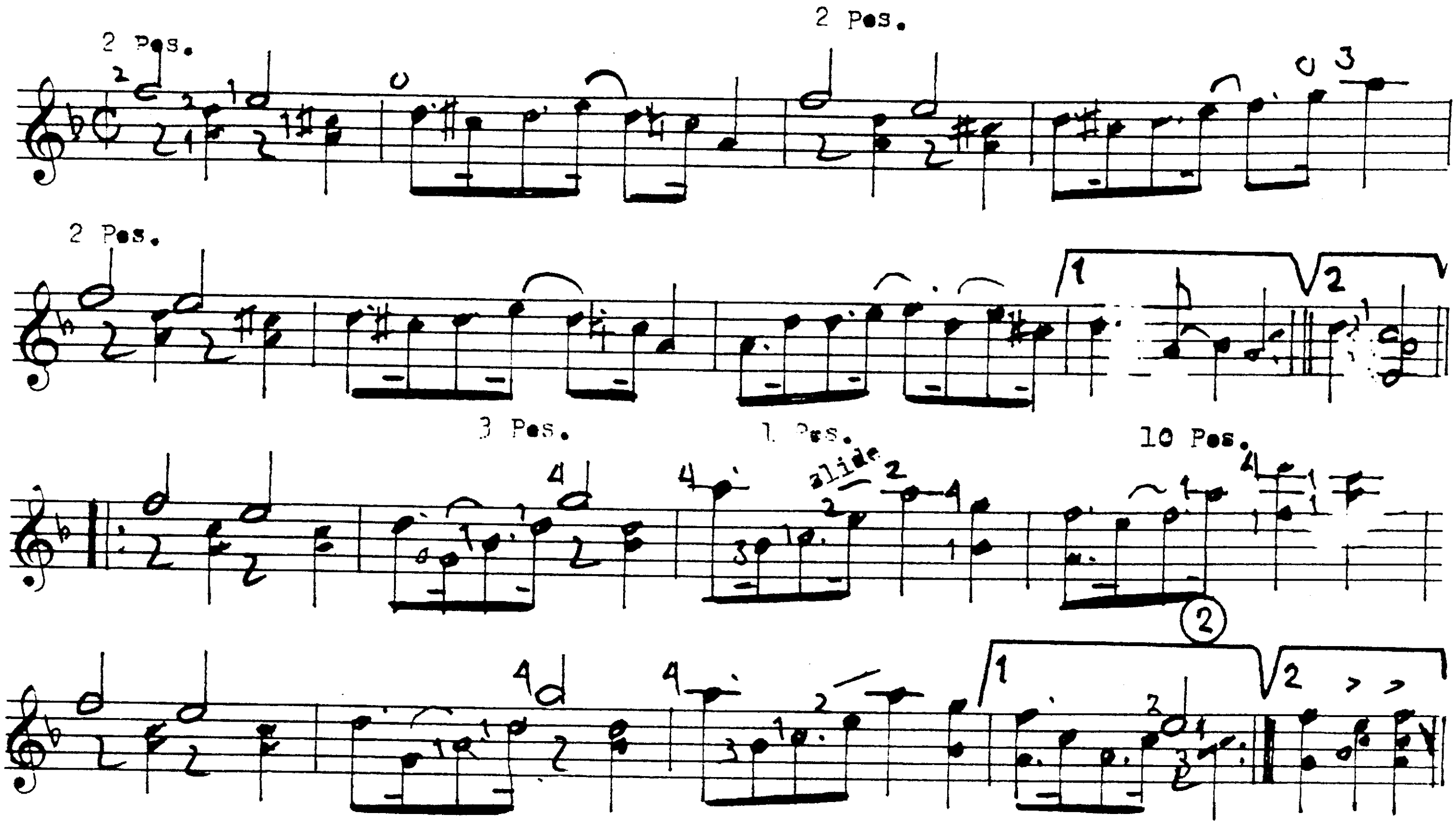
The slide from D on the bass string up to G, is one of the characteristic effects that has made the banjo so popular.

WOT CHER!

(Knocked 'Em in the Old Kent Rood)

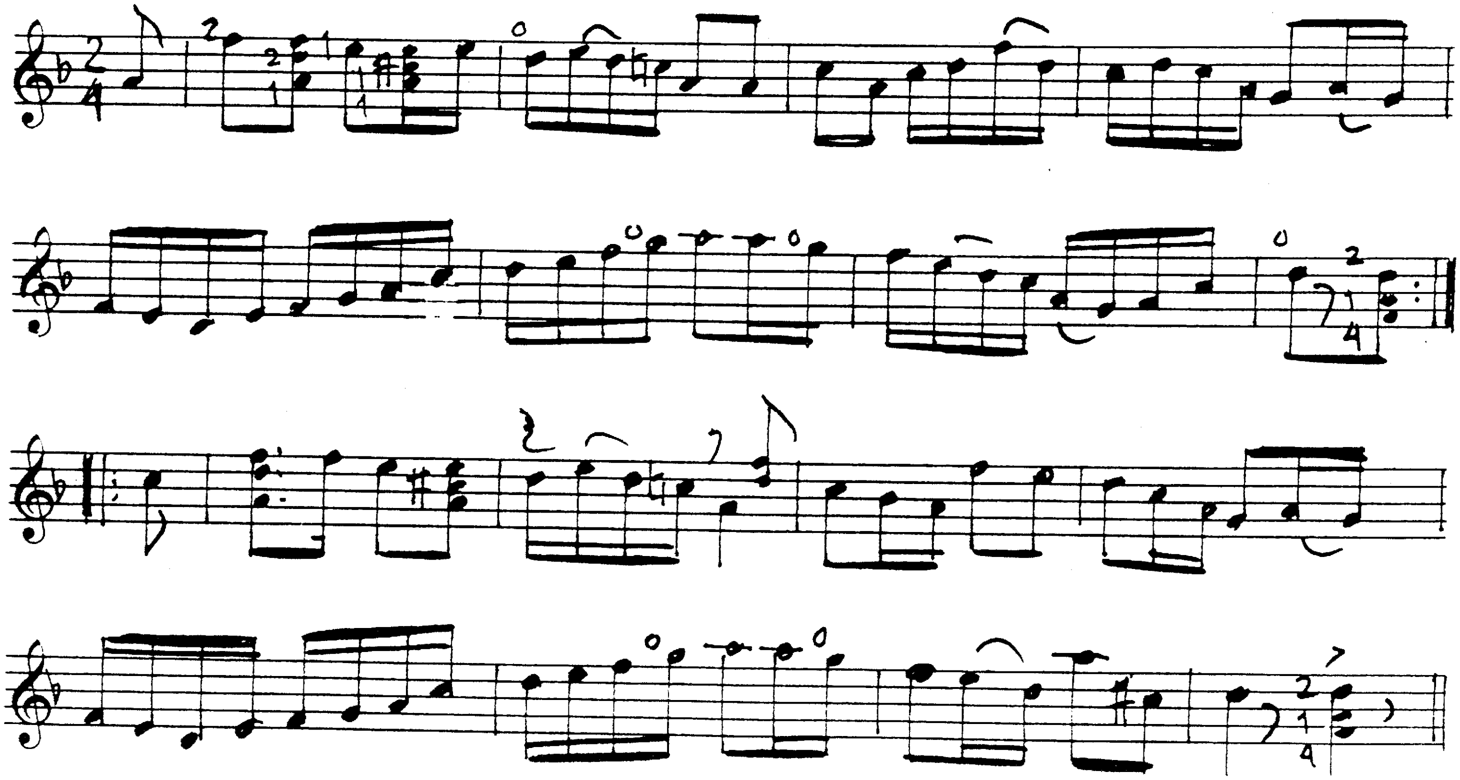
CHARLES INGLE
Arr. W. K. B.

Moderato

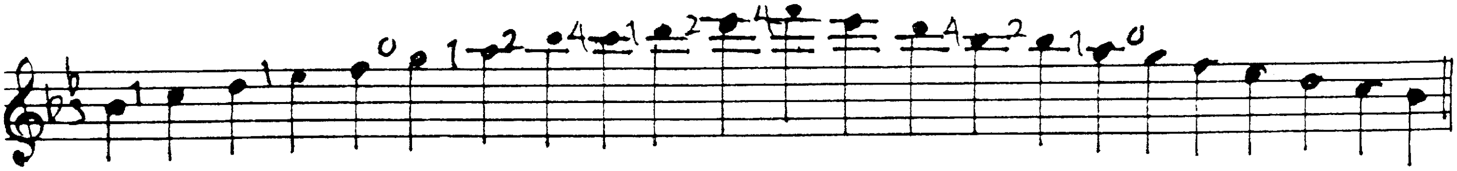


Shule, Shule Agrah.

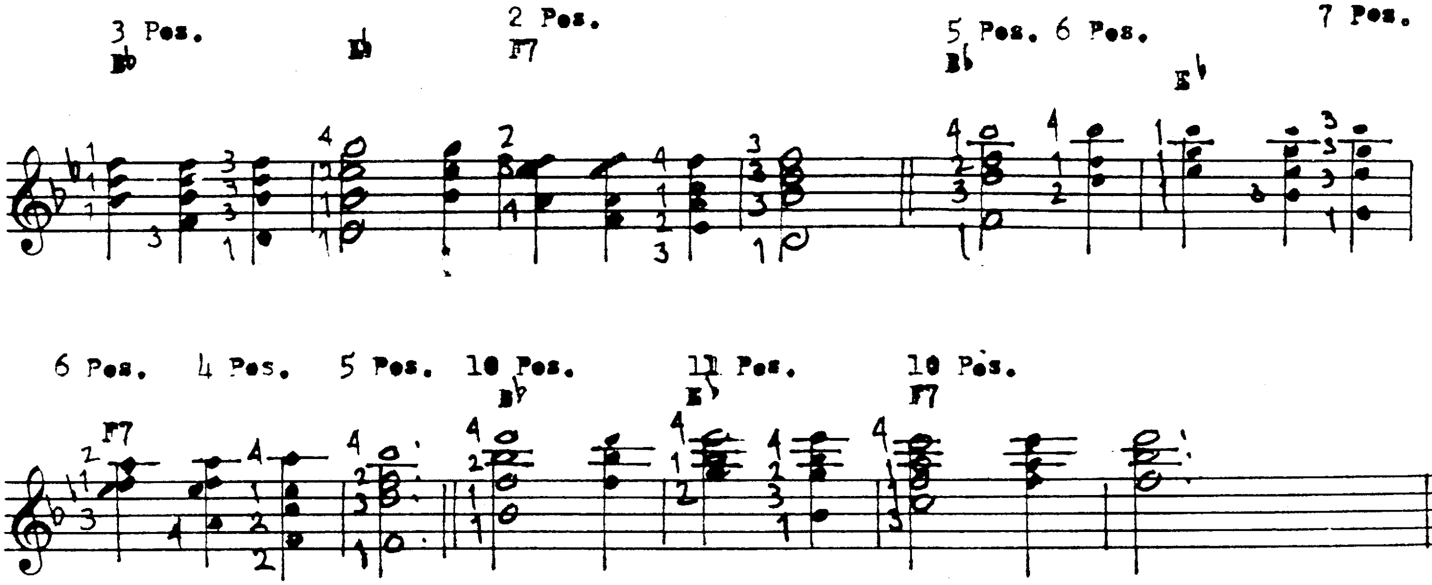
Reel.



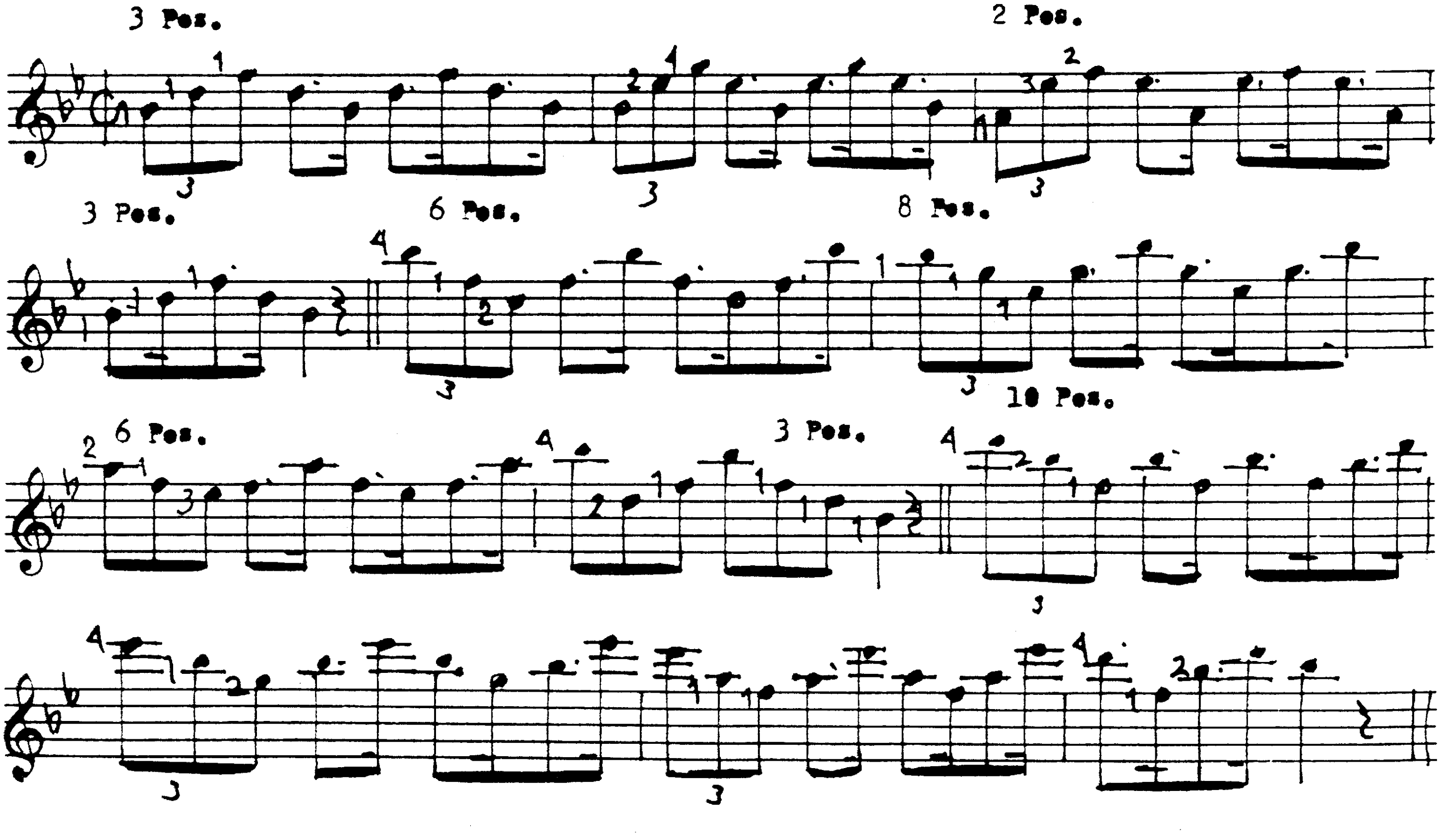
Scale in B♭ Major



Chords in B♭ Major



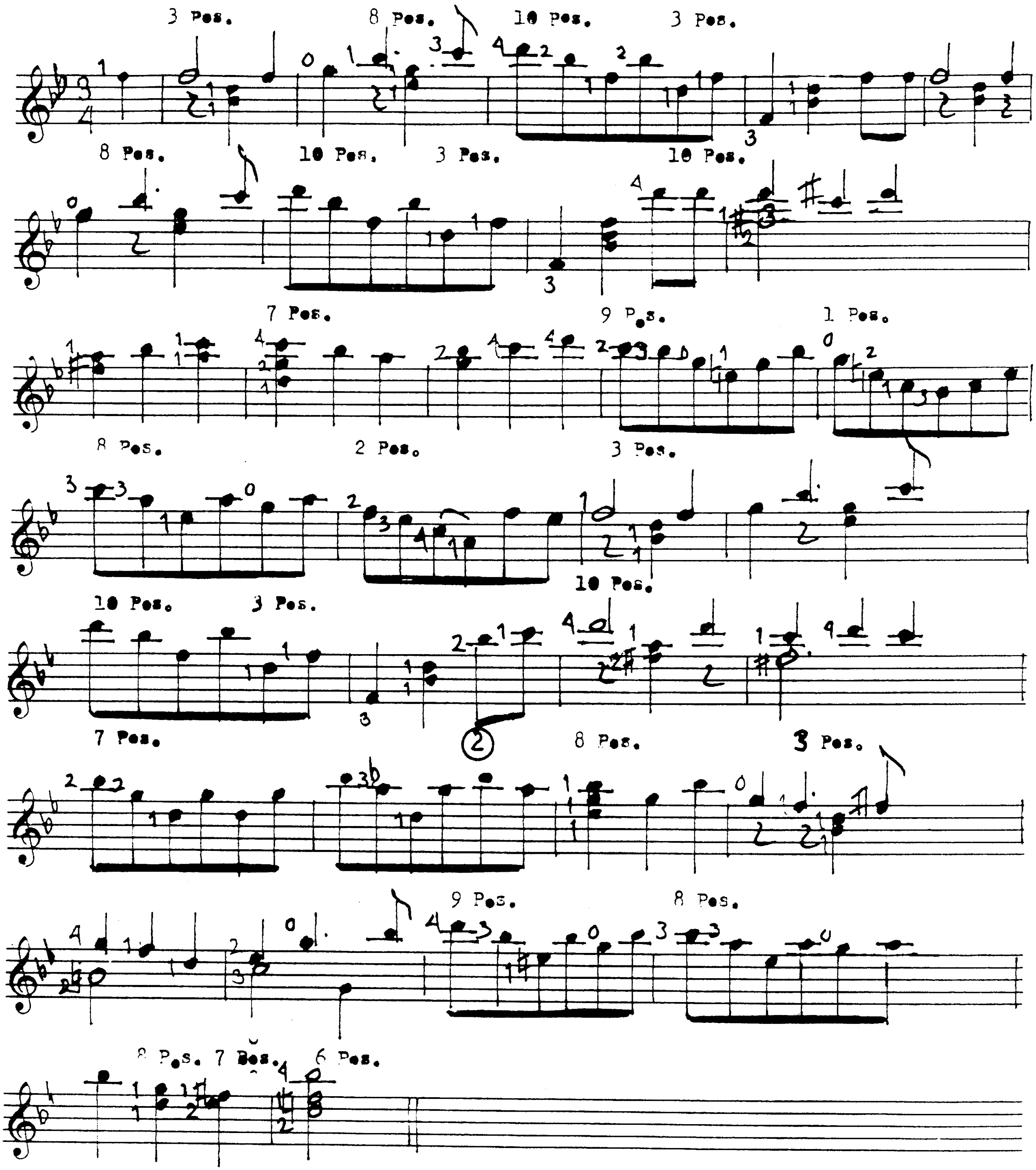
ETUDE



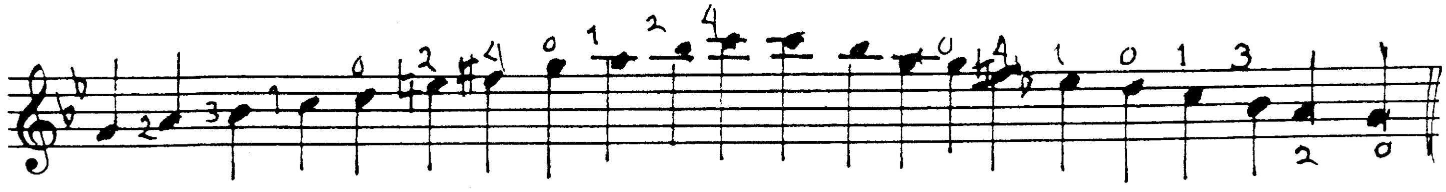
MY GAL SAL

PAUL DRESSER

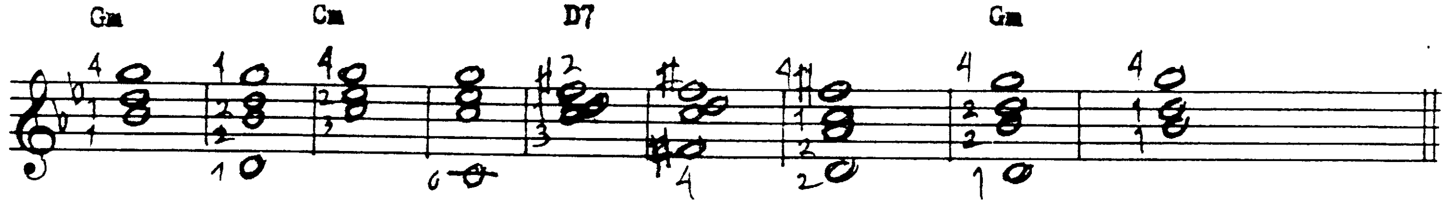
Arr. by Walter Kaye Bauer



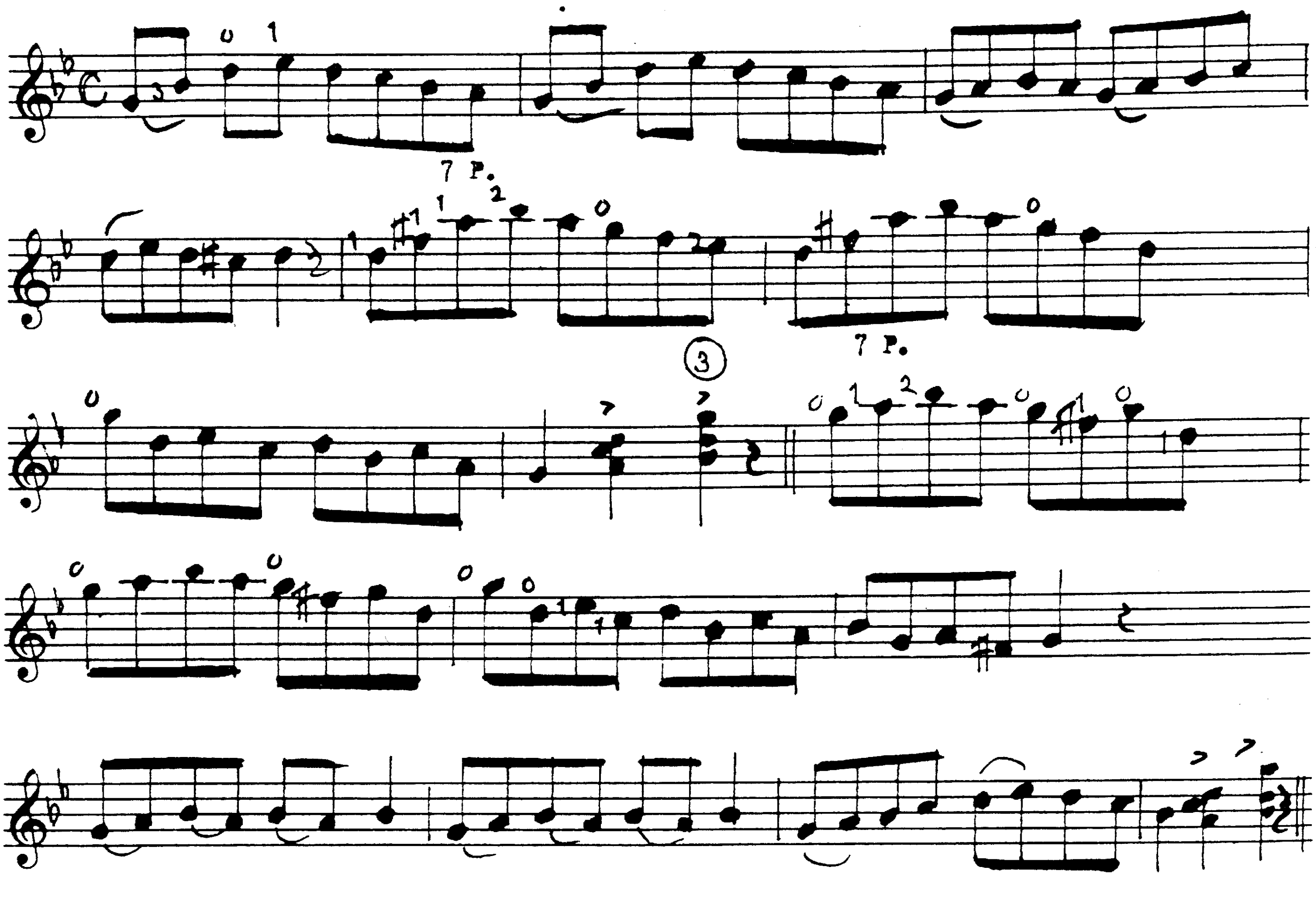
Scale in G Minor



Chords in G Minor

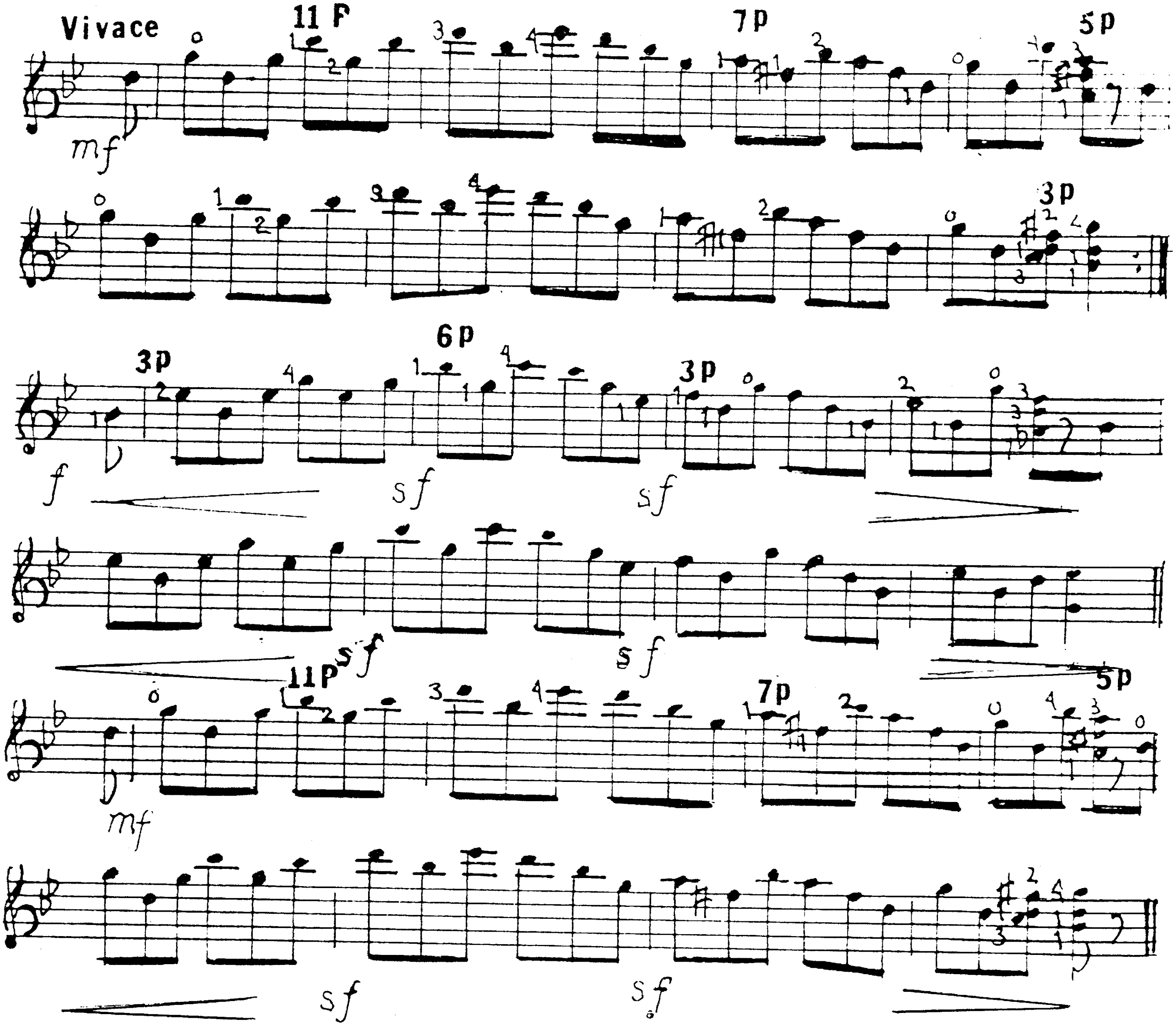


ETUDE.



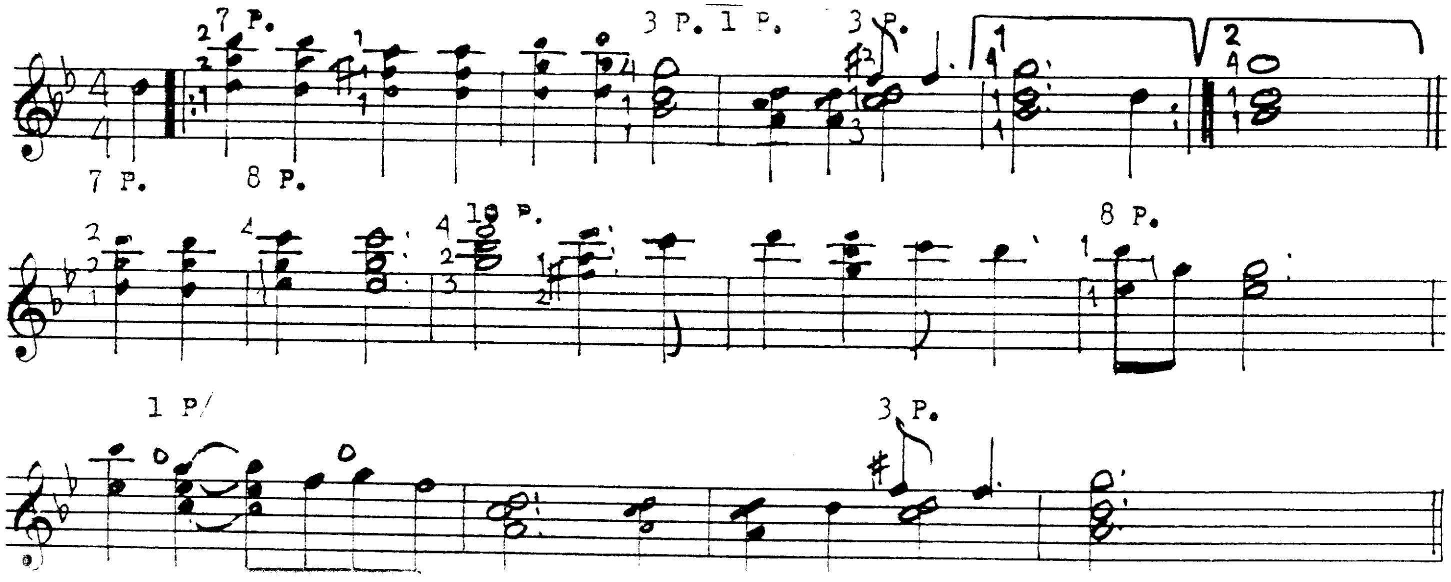
THE WILD HORSEMAN

R. Schumann



GO DOWN, MOSES

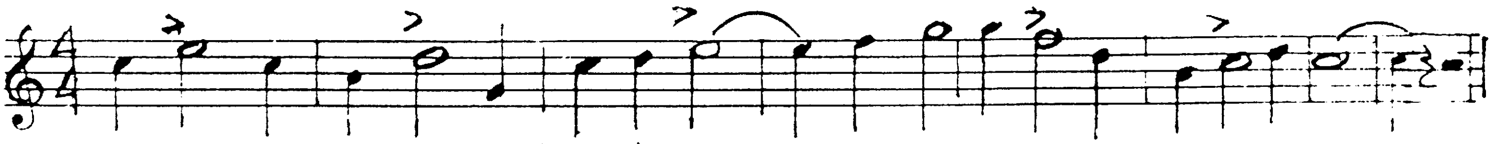
Slowly, with deep feeling



Syncopation

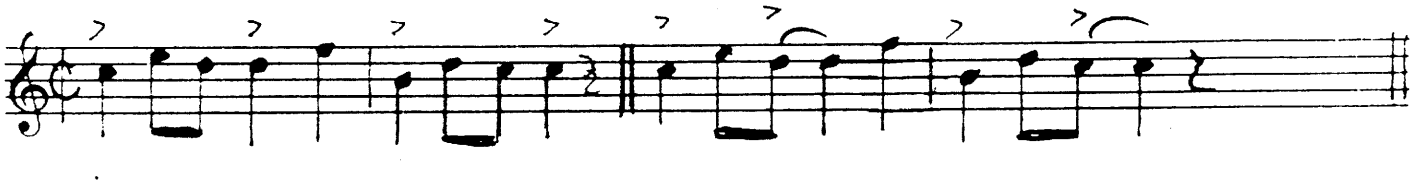
In every kind of time, there are definite places in which an accent or accents will occur. As an example, in common or 4/4 time, the accent will occur on the first and third beats. In beating time, the foot would come down on the first count and up on the second, then down again third and up on the fourth.

Now let us suppose that notes are so arranged that the second and third beats would be incorporated into one long note. This, of course, would displace the natural accent. The result is called syncopation. The following illustration will show this.

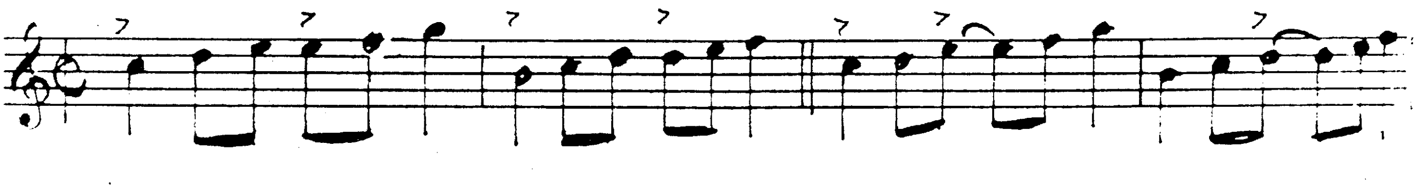


What you have just read, is the most elementary form on syncopation. What you are about to learn will prepare you to play every form of popular music such as CAKE-WALK, RAG TIME, JAZZ and SWING. The five string banjo has always enjoyed great popularity because it was one of the first instruments used in the old style of recording, wherein the performer played into a huge megaphone, while the sound impulses were being engraved into hot wax by the recording device. The appealing snap of the banjo registered beautifully on these recordings, and the instrument gained tremendous popularity.

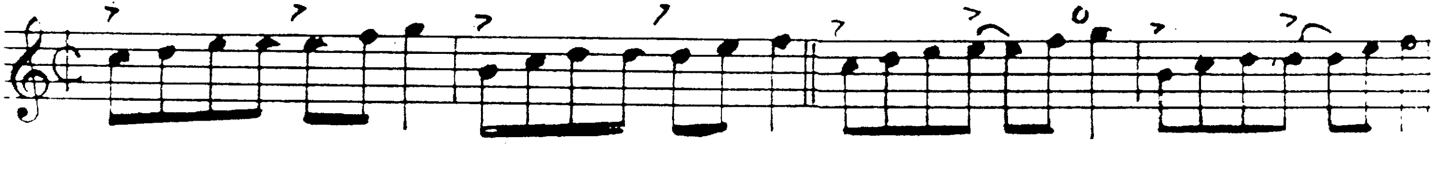
In each of the following examples, we have two preparatory measures, followed by the syncopated pattern. Play the preparatory example several times before trying the syncopated version. The first measure of the syncopated pattern should sound like the phrase RIPE, BA-NA-NA, with the accent falling on the first Na.



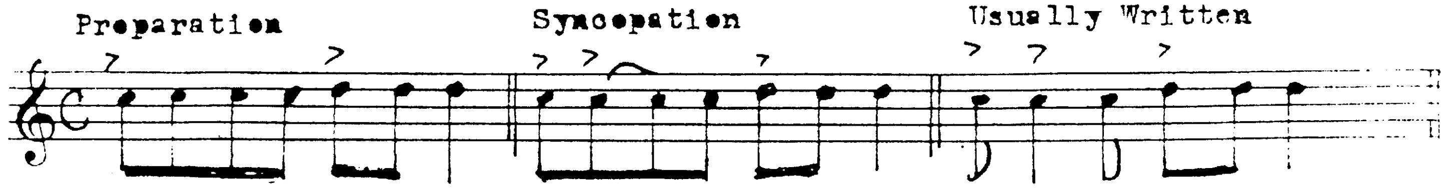
In the syncopated example of the next exercise, the player should listen to the phrase "play that tune again". The accent falls on the word "tune".



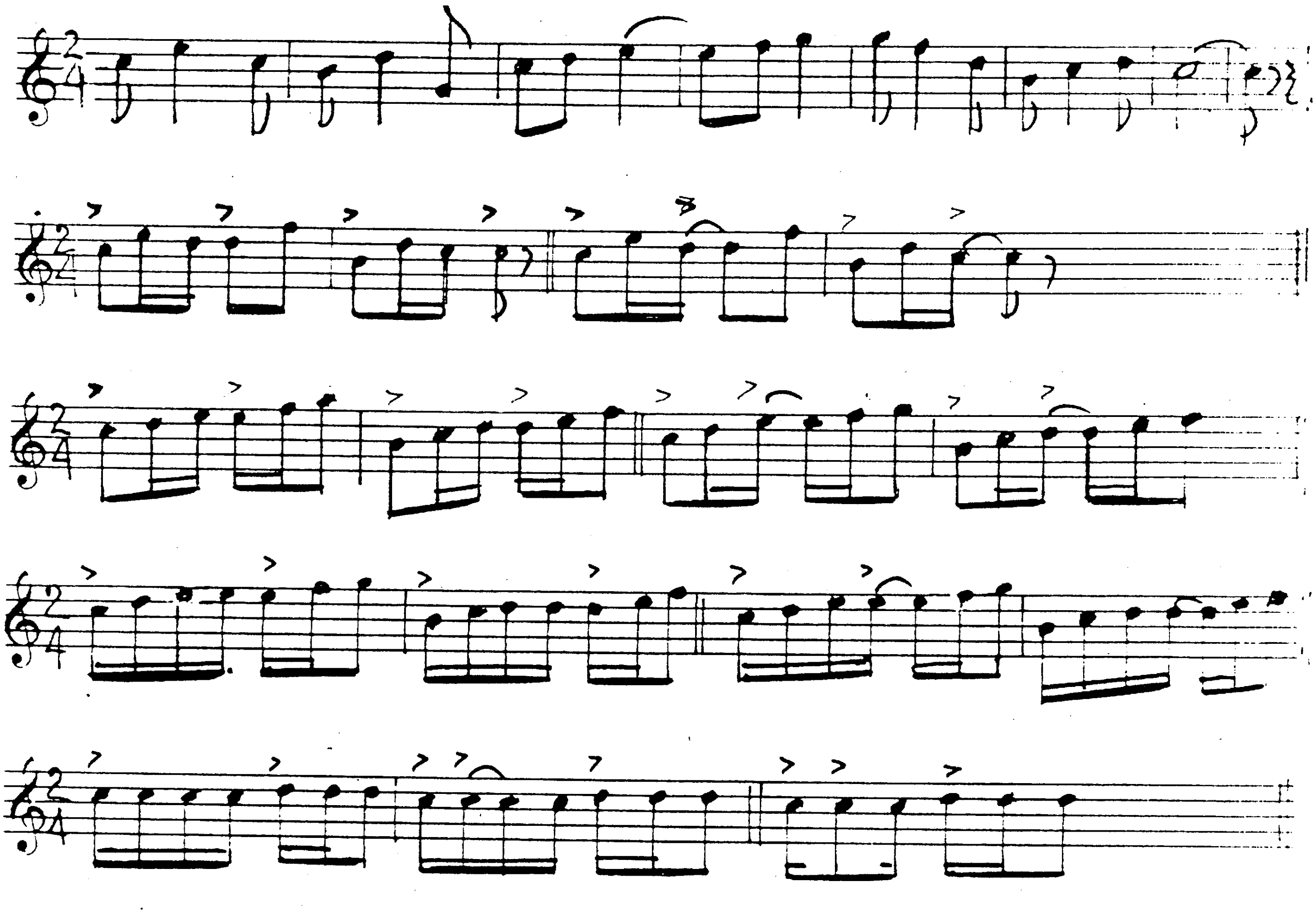
In the syncopated part of the next example, the phrase "Play me that tune again", should be heard. Notice the slight deviation from the previous example by adding the word "me" to it After a short while, you will be amazed at the number of standard popular songs you will find employing these rythmic examples.



In the next example, we show just one preparatory measure. In playing the second measure, think of this phrase, "Pea-nuts and pop corn too". The accent should fall on the second syllable "nuts".



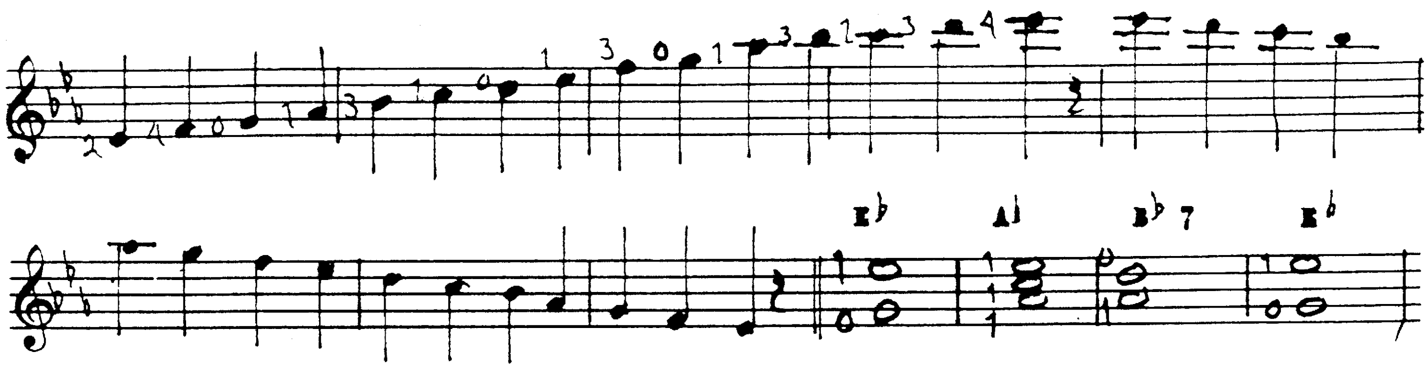
It should be obvious to everyone studying music, that the same subject can be done in various times. The following examples in two-four time should sound exactly the same as those previously learned in four-four time, but a little faster.



Syncopation is also used in waltz time. The following example illustrates this.

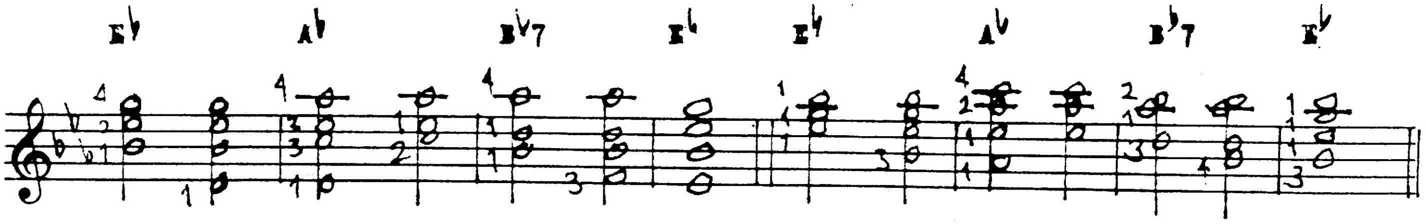
Now avail yourself of some standard popular songs and study the rhythm patterns therein. You are certain to find some, if not all of the above patterns in various songs.

Scale in E♭ Major

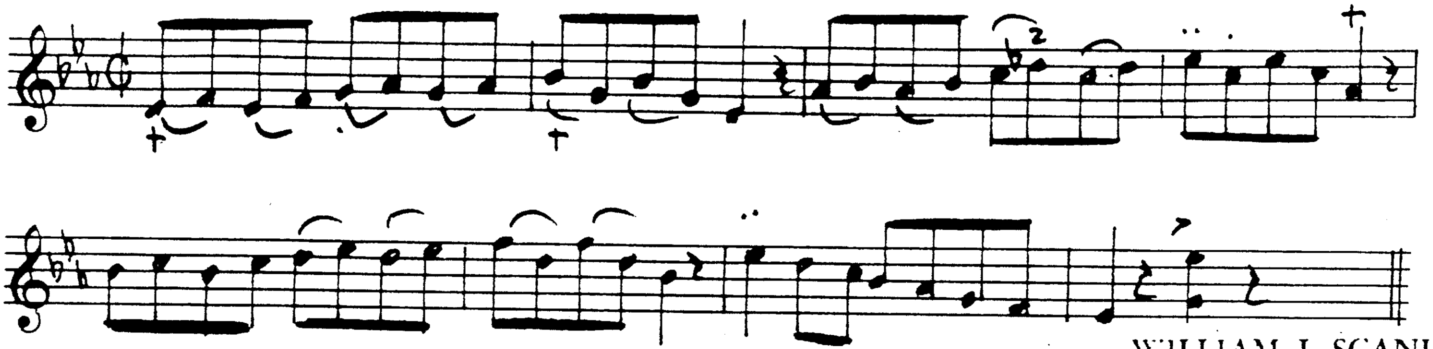


The small chords shown above ($E^\flat$ and $B^{\flat 7}$) are, of course, incomplete since the tuning of the banjo makes it impossible to play them in the low register. However, the next set of chords are all complete.

Chords in E♭ Major

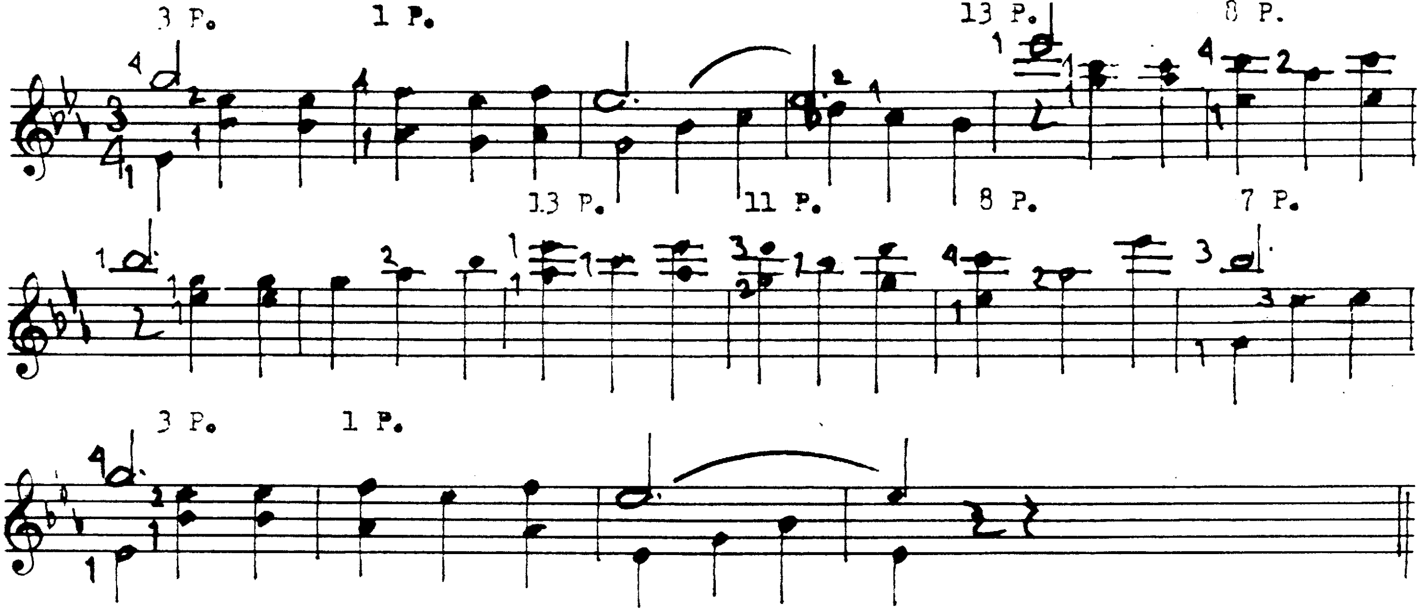


Exercise



WILLIAM J. SCANLON

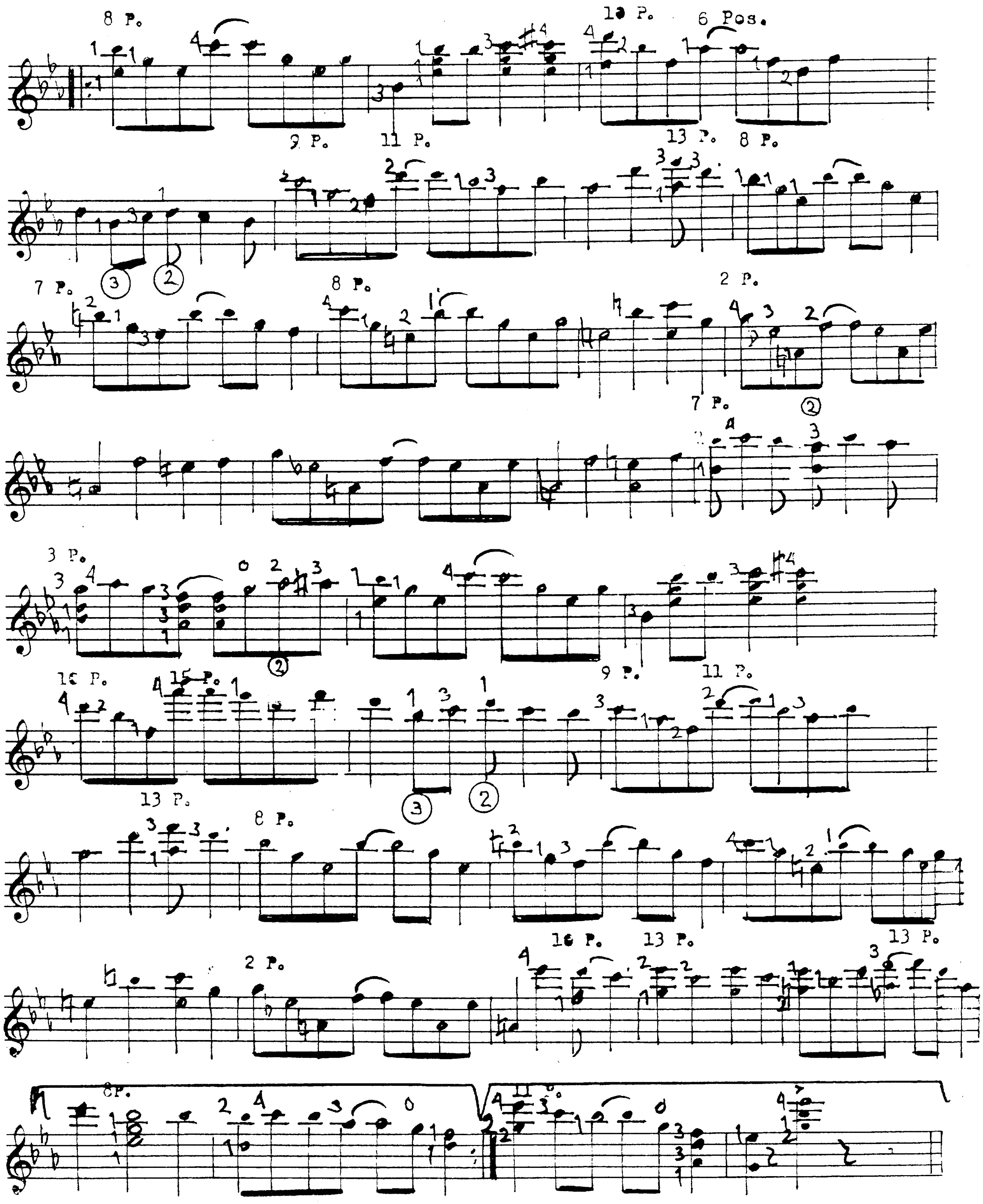
MY NELLY'S BLUE EYES



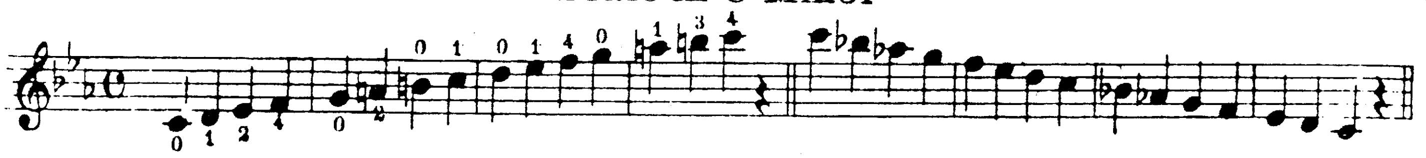
Ida! Sweet as Apple Cider.

Music by
EDDIE MUNSON

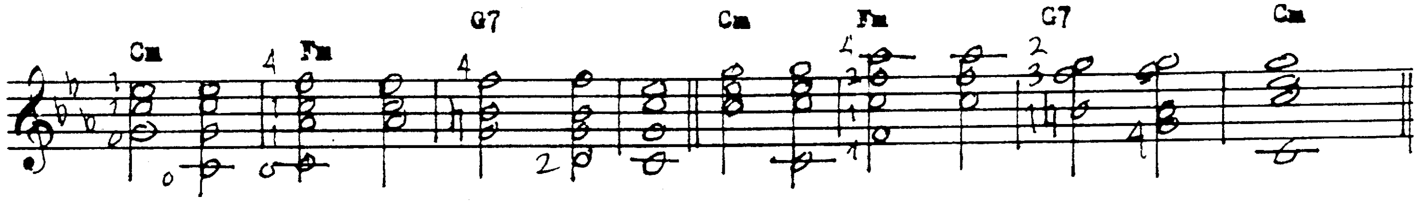
Arr. by Walter Kaye Bauer



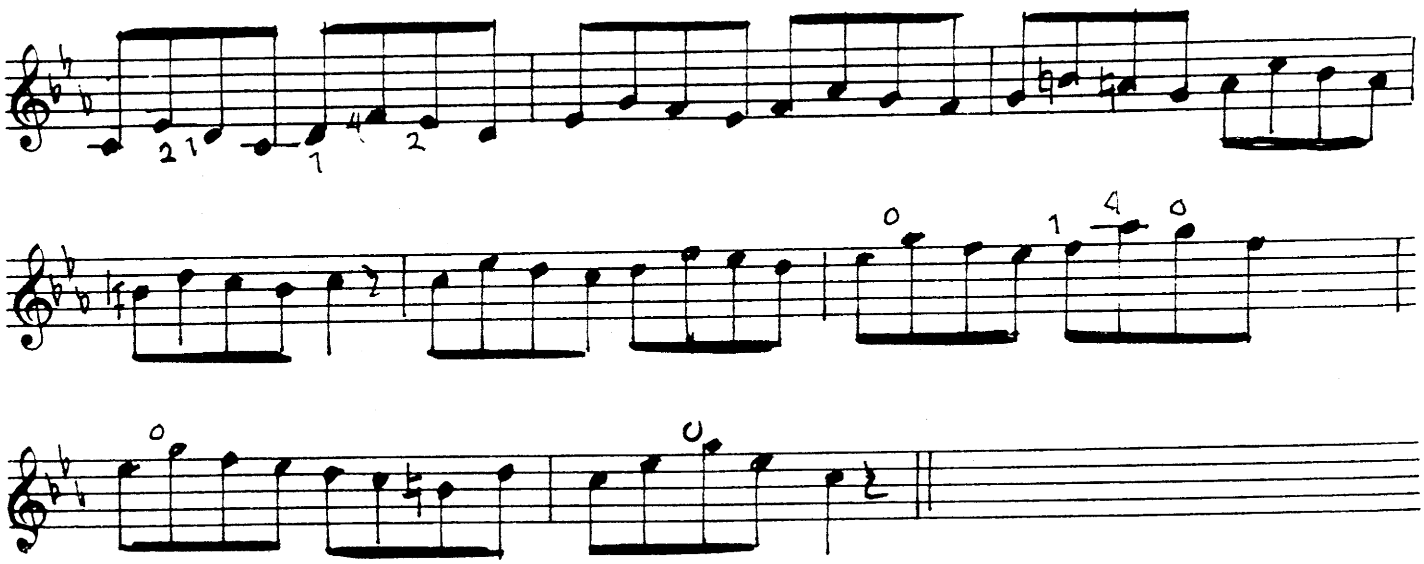
Scale in C Minor



Chords in C Minor



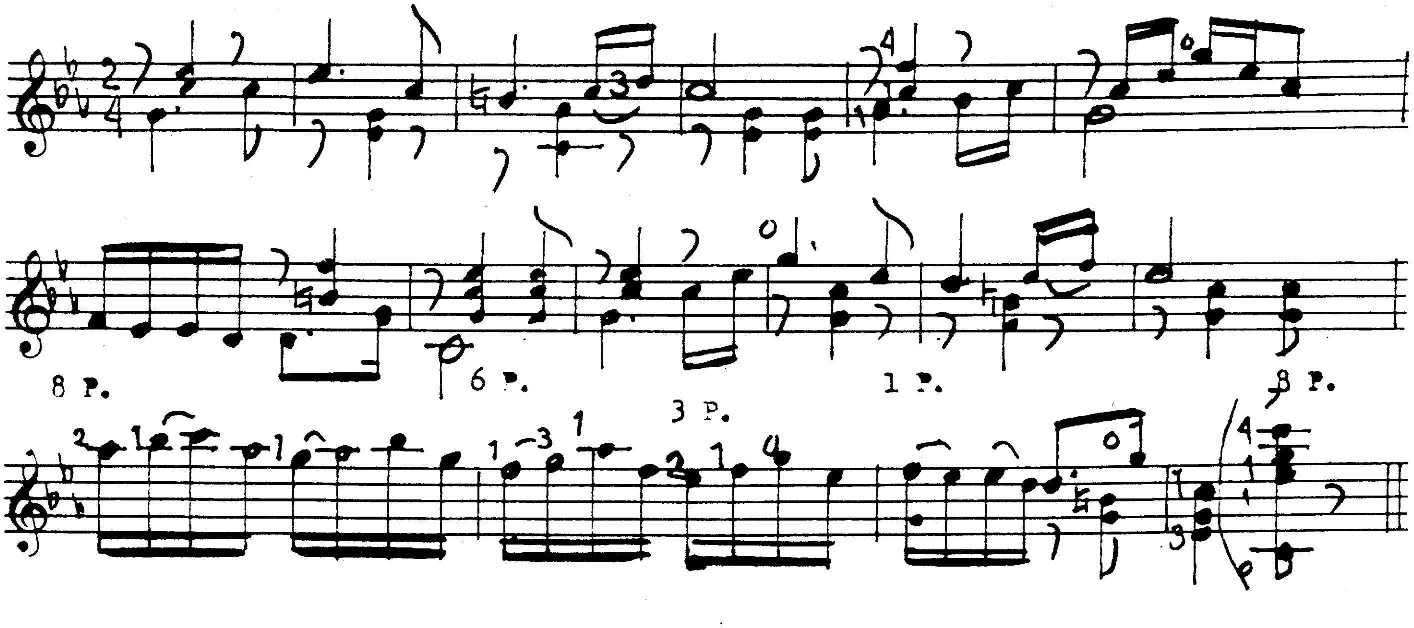
Exercise



Hungarian Dance

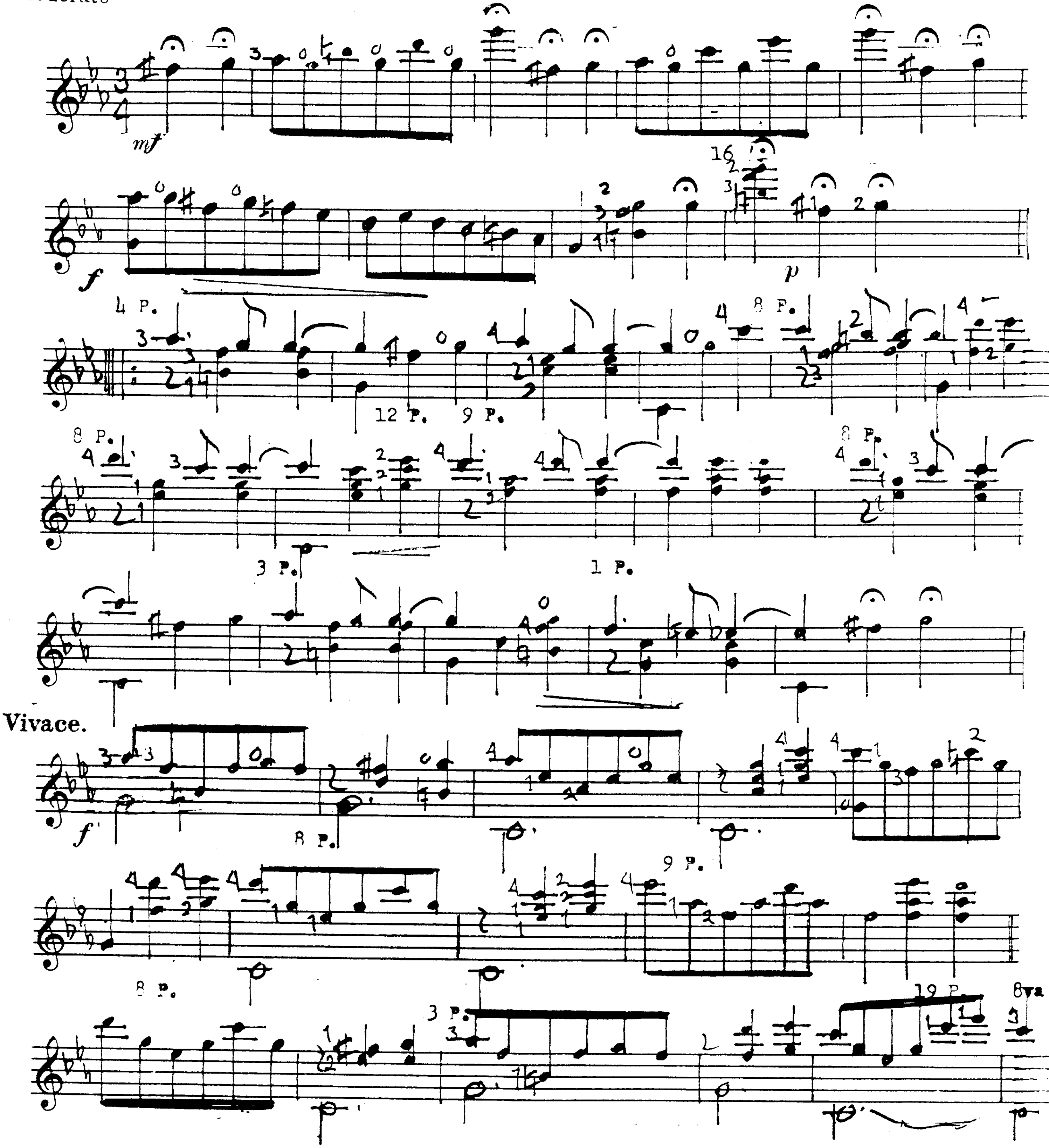
Nº 5

JOHANNES BRAHMS



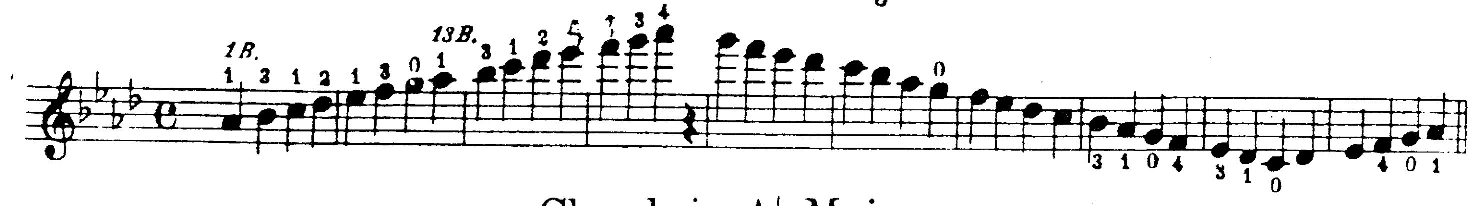
DARK EYES

TRADITIONAL
Arranged by Walter Kaye Bauer

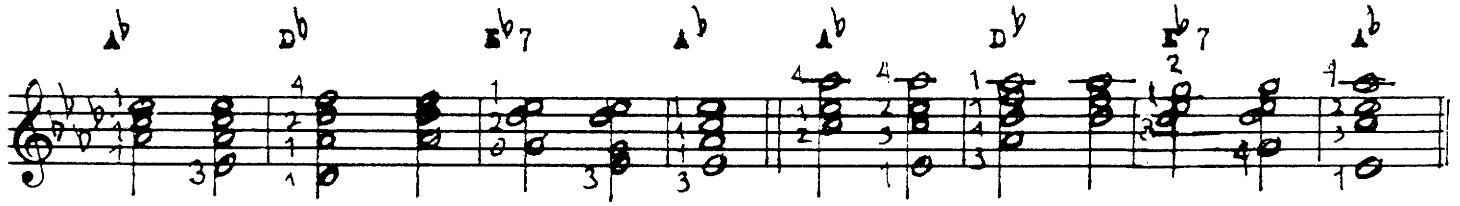


The key of C minor is one of the most flexible keys in which to play on the banjo

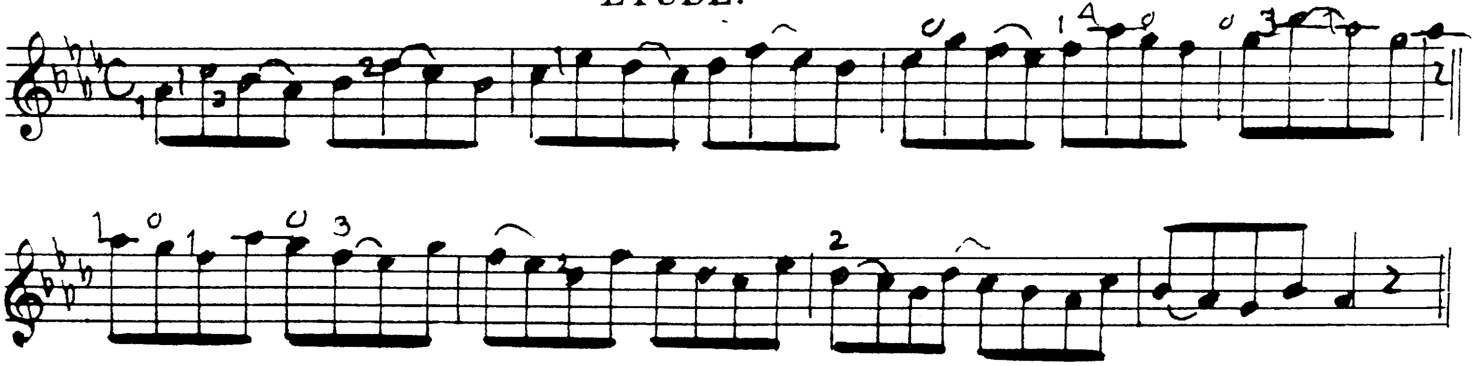
Scale in A♭ Major



Chords in A♭ Major

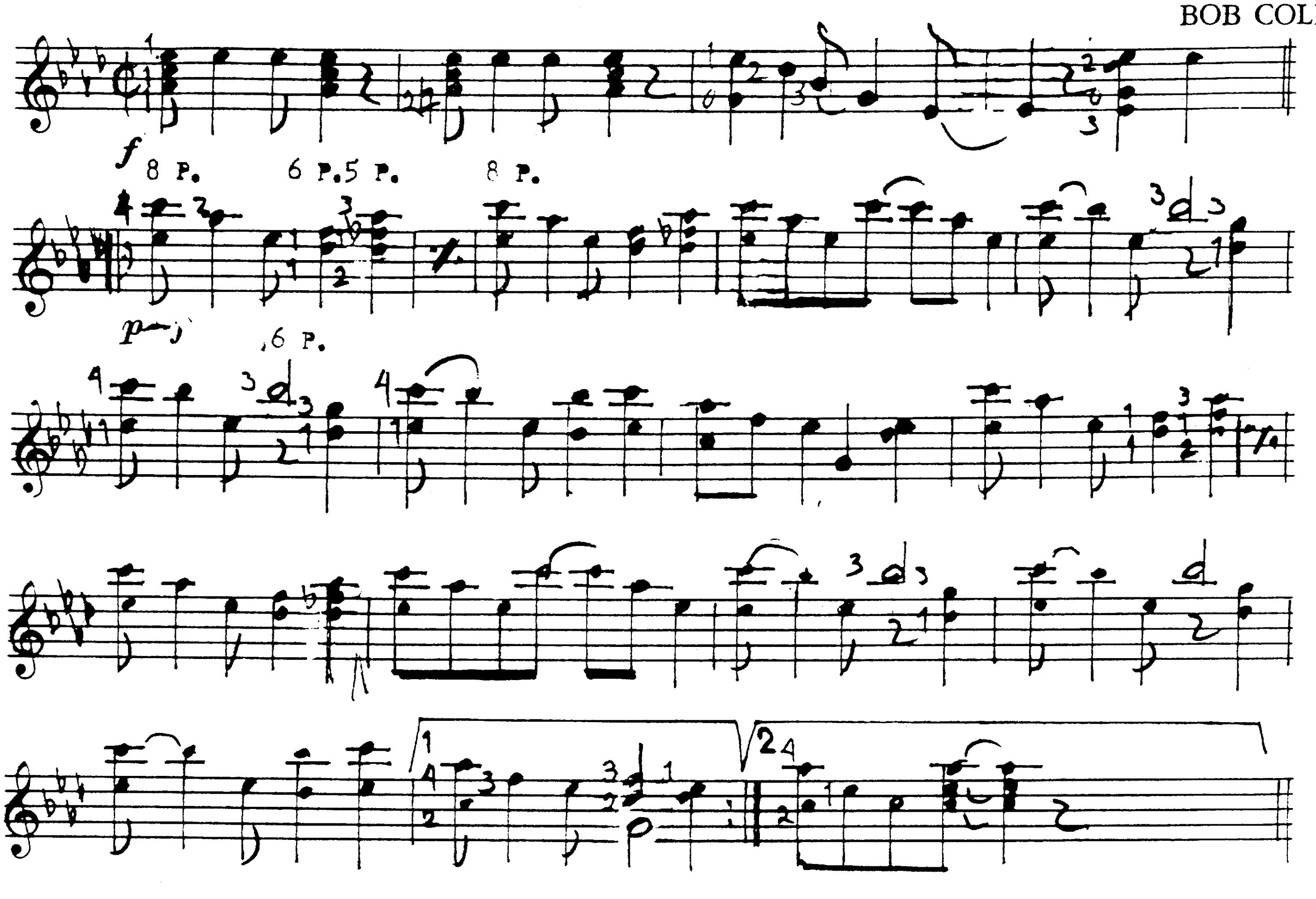


ETUDE.



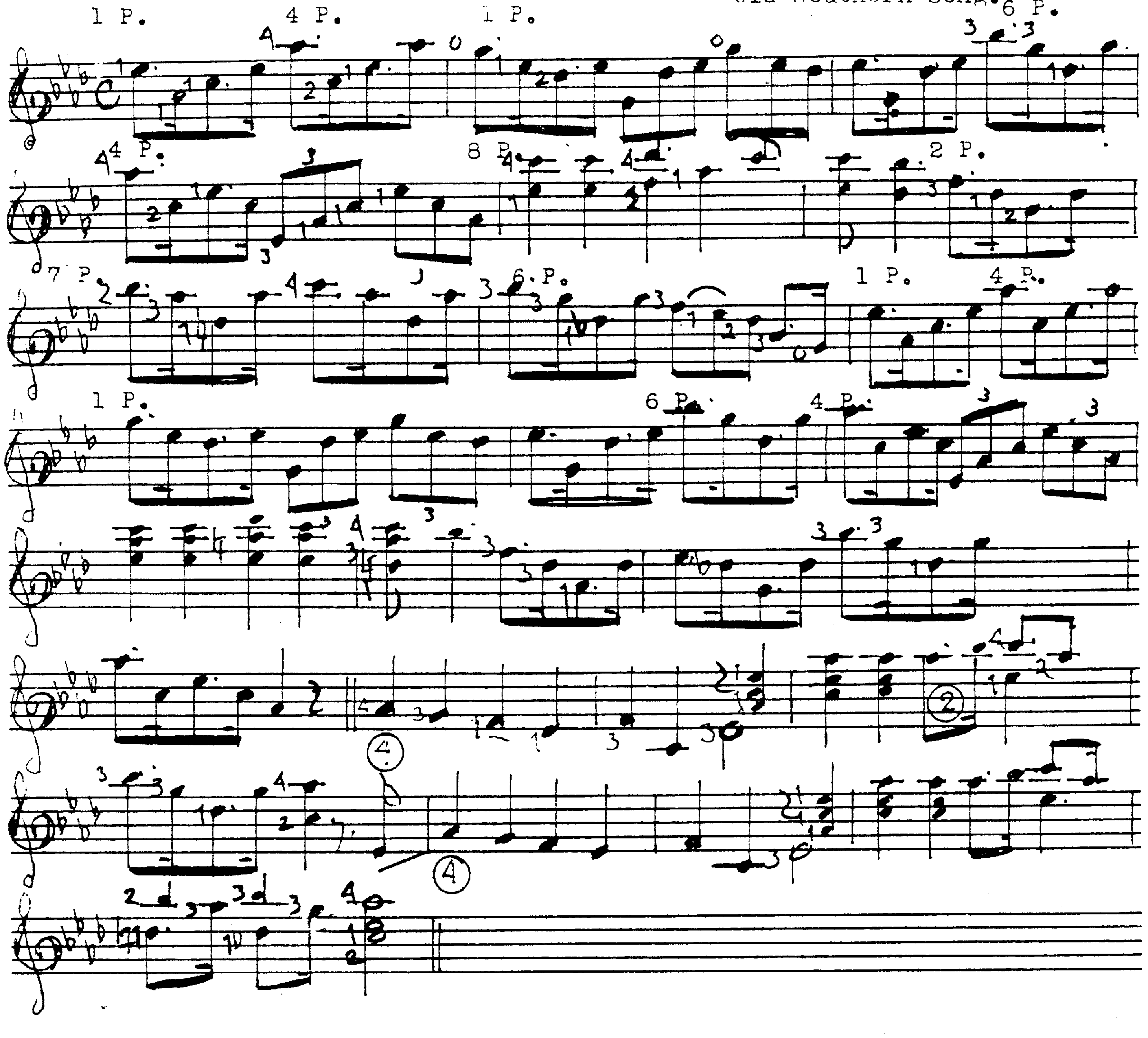
UNDER THE BAMBOO TREE

BOB COLE



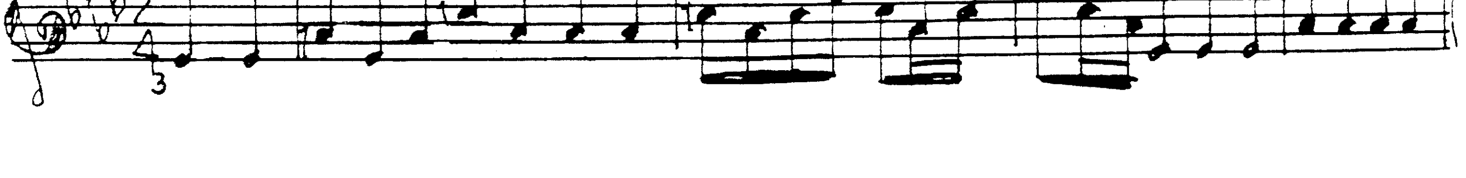
DOWN MOBILE

Old Southern Song.

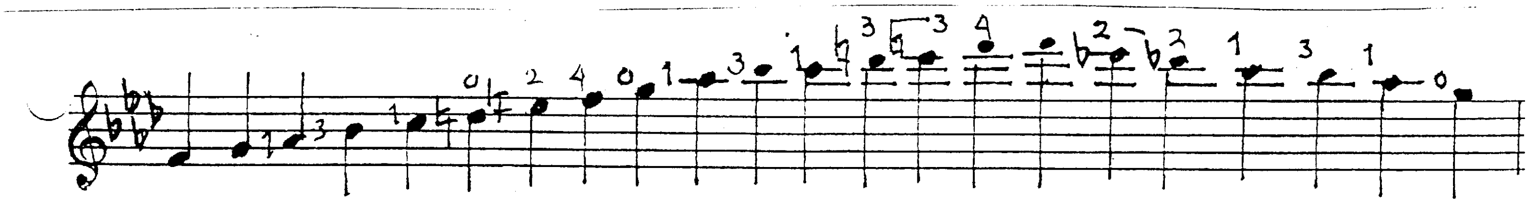


BUGLE CALLS

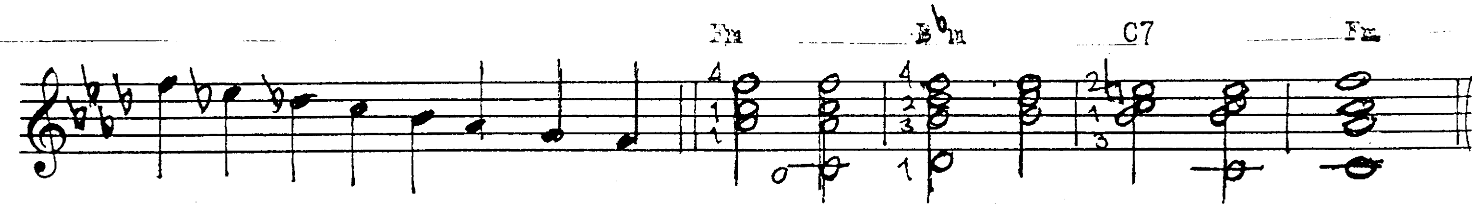
Almost any bugle call may be faithfully simulated on the five string banjo. The following example is that of the well known "Assembly" used by all of the United States Armed Forces. Since the chord on which it is made is movable (named on the third string) it should be apparent that it, and other bugle calls, may be played at any fret on the banjo.

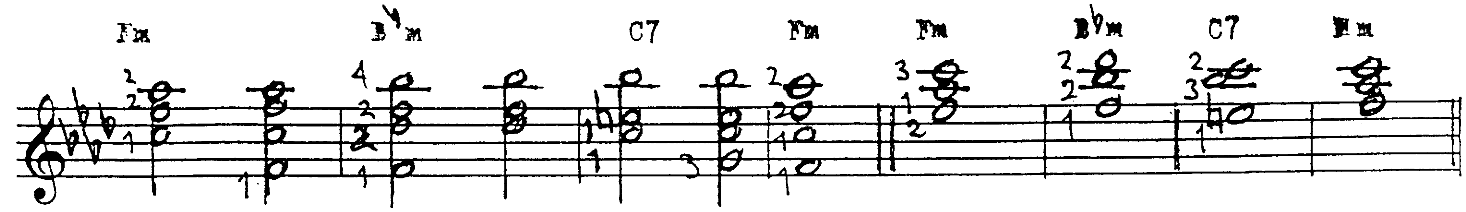


Scale in F Minor

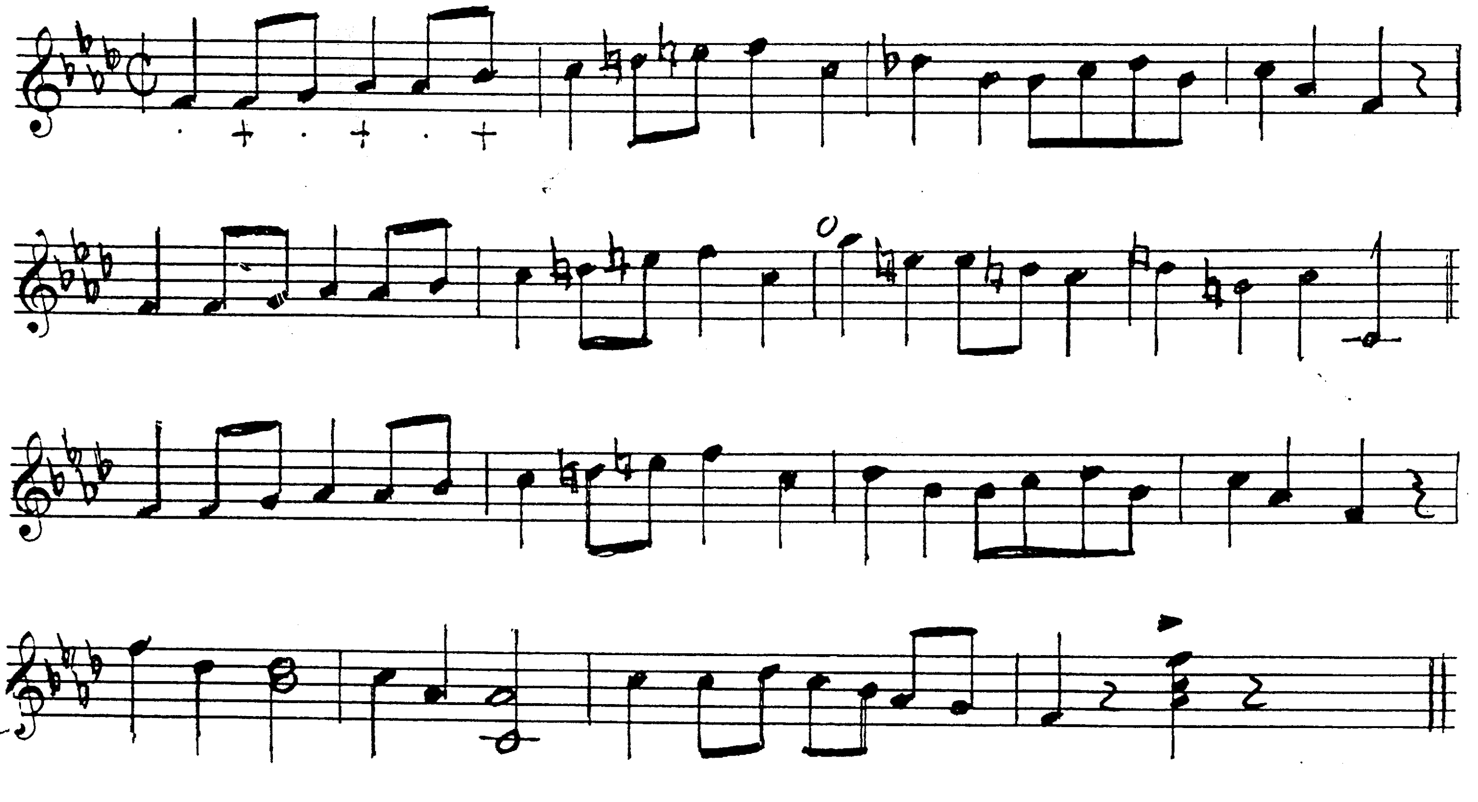


Chords in F Minor





Exercise

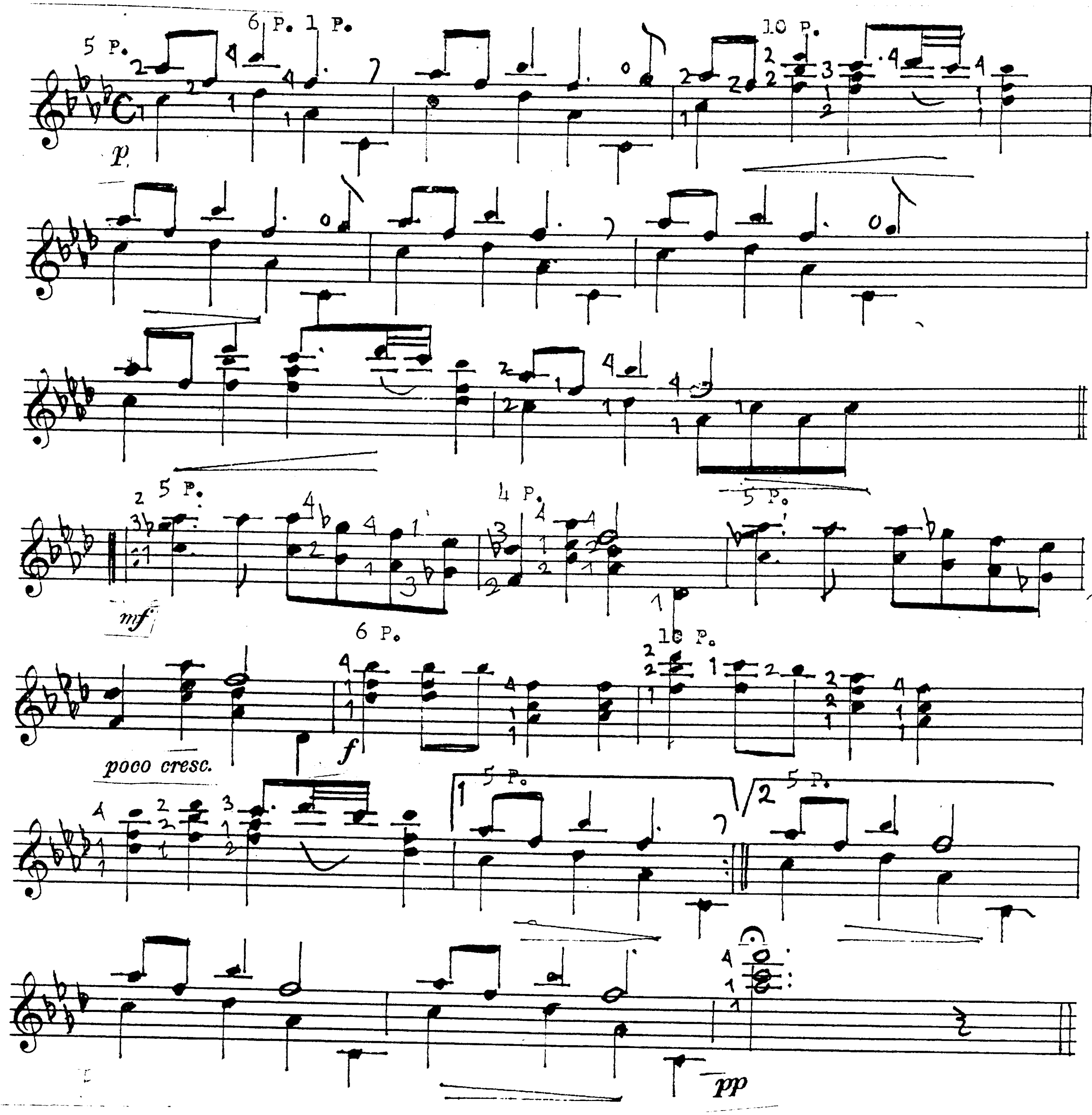


Volga Boat Song

Russian Folk Song

Arr. by Walter Kaye Bauer

Andante sostenuto.



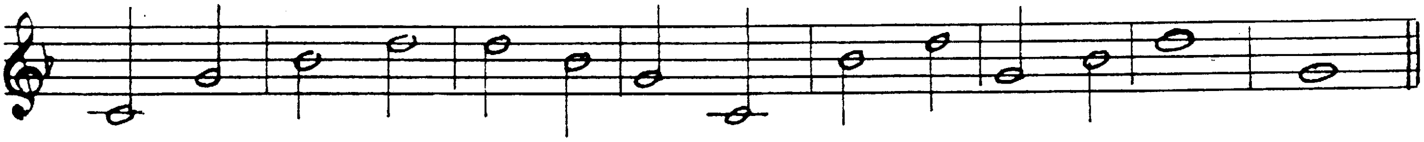
In the past, too many banjoists feared playing in two, three and four flat keys and their relative minor keys. While it is true that each instrument has its favorite or "flexible" keys, the flat keys are actually not difficult.

Harmonics.

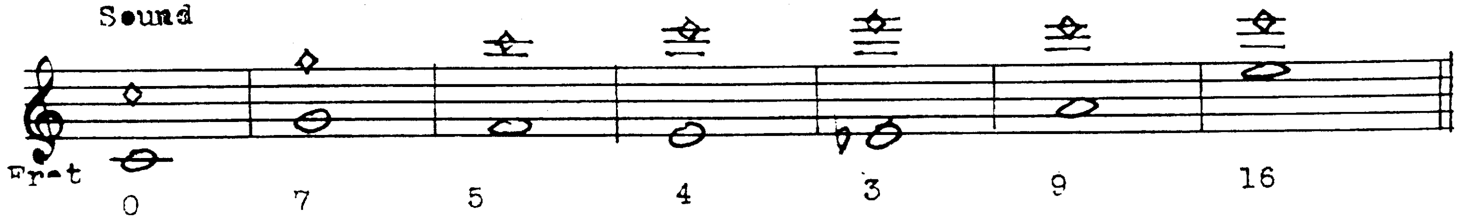
Harmonics are those bell-like tones for which all stringed instruments are famous. On the banjo, we have two kinds of harmonics - the right hand, and the left.

Natural right hand harmonics are found on every third division of a string, starting at the twelfth fret. These will also be the most resonant. The other harmonics are found on the seventh, fifth, fourth and third frets. The latter is rather weak, due to the shortness left in the string length. The harmonic on the fourth fret may be duplicated on the ninth and sixteenth frets also.

To make any harmonic, let the fourth or third finger touch the string at the indicated fret, and right on top of it. Do not press down hard on the string. Begin by playing harmonics at the twelfth fret of each string, as the following example shows. Each will sound the same as the fingered note at the twelfth fret, or in other words, an octave higher than the open string.

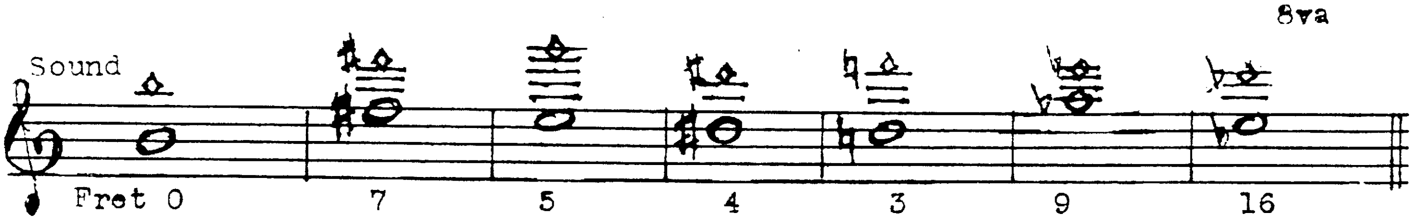


Beginning now with the fourth string, play the harmonics on the indicated frets, remembering that the notes shown will be what we would normally play at these frets. What may puzzle you, is the fact that the resulting sound going in a direction toward the peg head is high in pitch. Normally we would expect the higher sound in going toward the bridge. Notice, also, that when you play each harmonic in succession, you will be sounding the broken chord of C major.

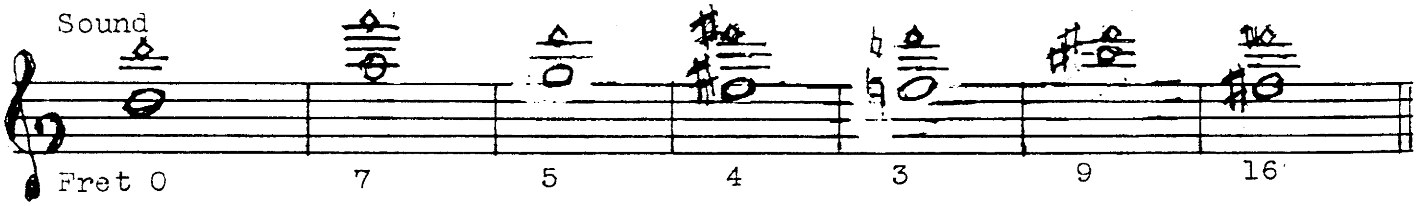


We shall now play the harmonics on the third string, exactly as we did those on the fourth. Like the fourth string, these harmonics will give us the chord of G major when played in succession.

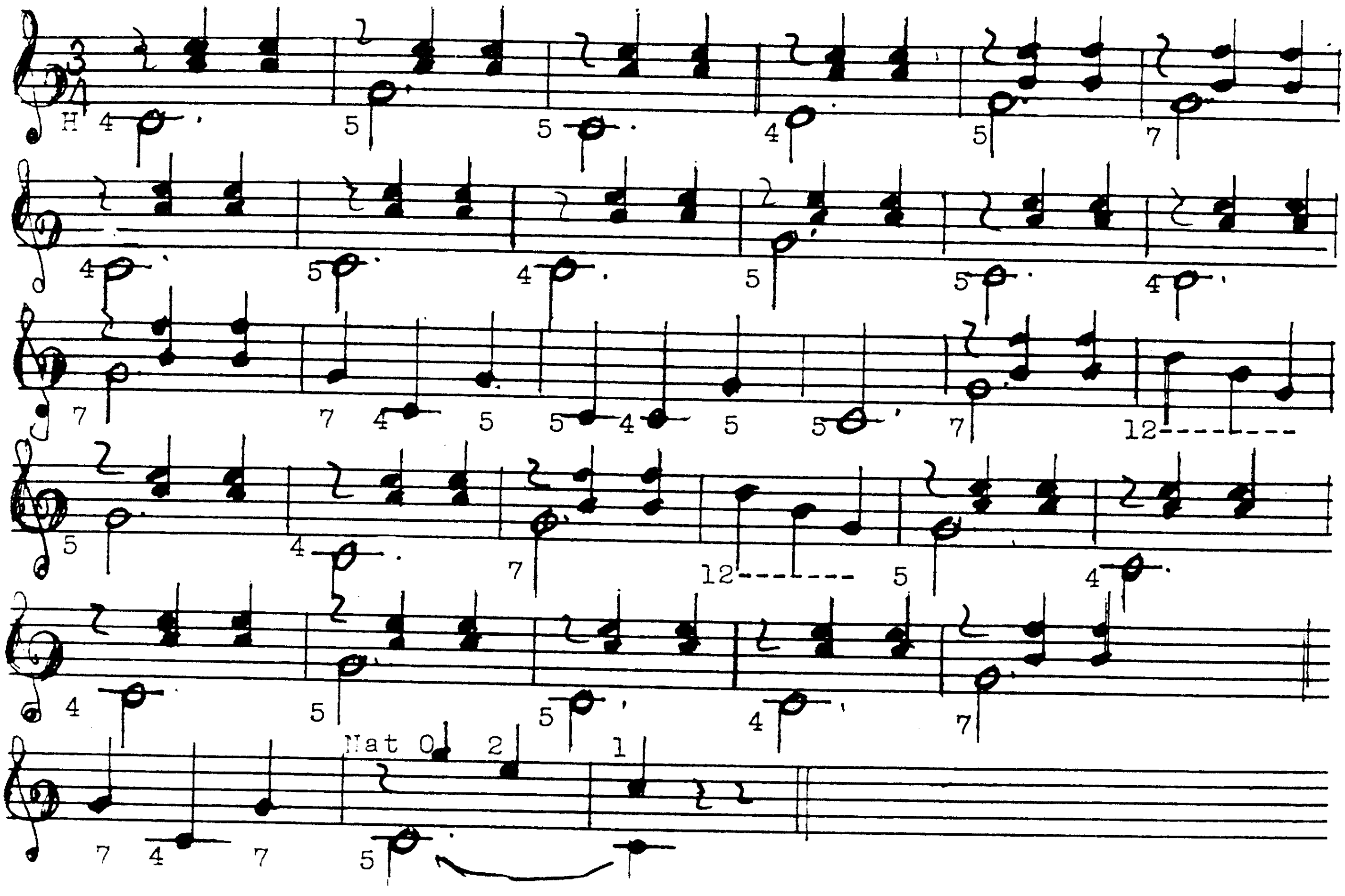
The harmonics on the second and first strings do not have as good a quality as those on the third and fourth. The reason for this, of course, is the thinner gauge of the strings. Those at the twelfth fret are good in quality, but they lose on the higher strings as we move toward the peg head. Here are the harmonics on the second string. Notice again that they produce the arpeggio of B major.



Now, we finish this study with the harmonics on the first string. Notice that the resulting arpeggio is that of D major.



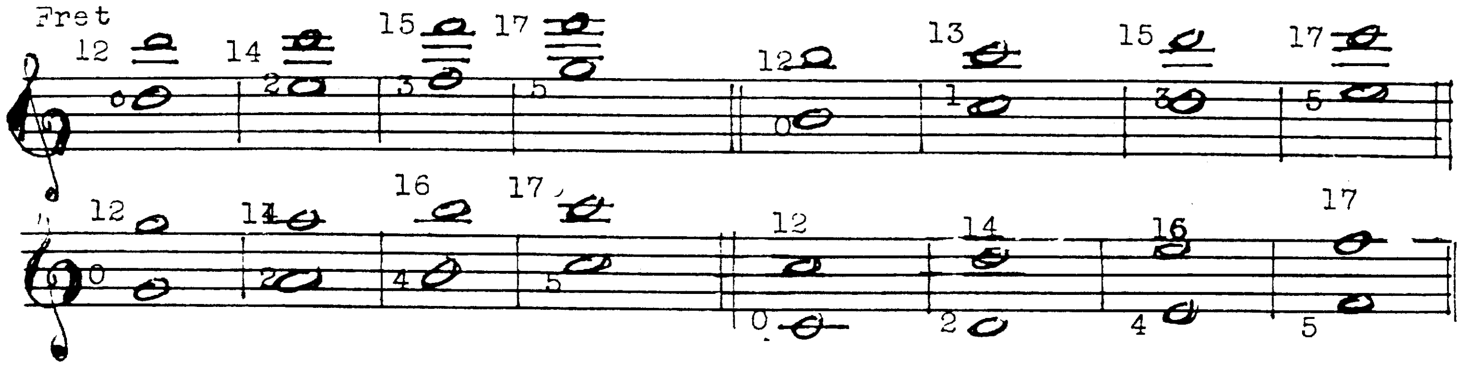
Now as a reward for all of this fussy study, we present a simple, but effective little waltz in harmonics. Remember, the harmonic fret number is shown together with the string on which it is to be played. The little chord accompaniment shown above each harmonic sounded should be played rather softly.



Fingered Harmonics

Very little music has ever been written or published for the use of fingered or so-called left hand harmonics. In the event that one finds such an example, here is how it is done.

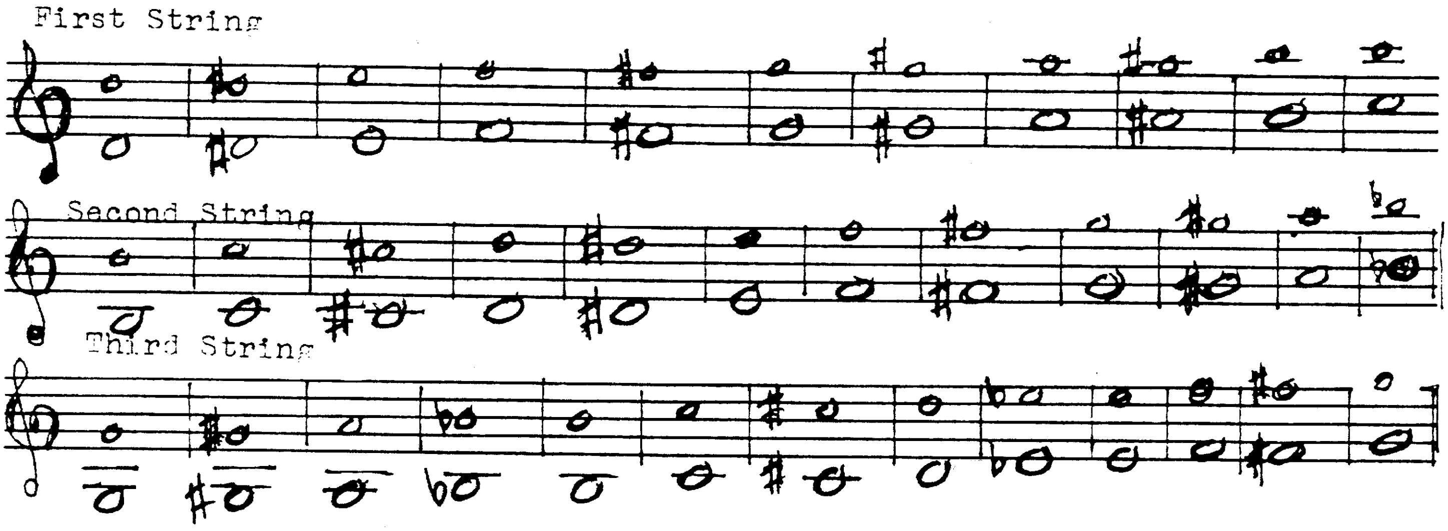
Finger the left hand note just as it is written. Now touch the note twelve frets higher on the same string, with the tip of the first finger of the right hand, and pick the string in back of that finger. Be sure not to release the pressure on the fingered note.



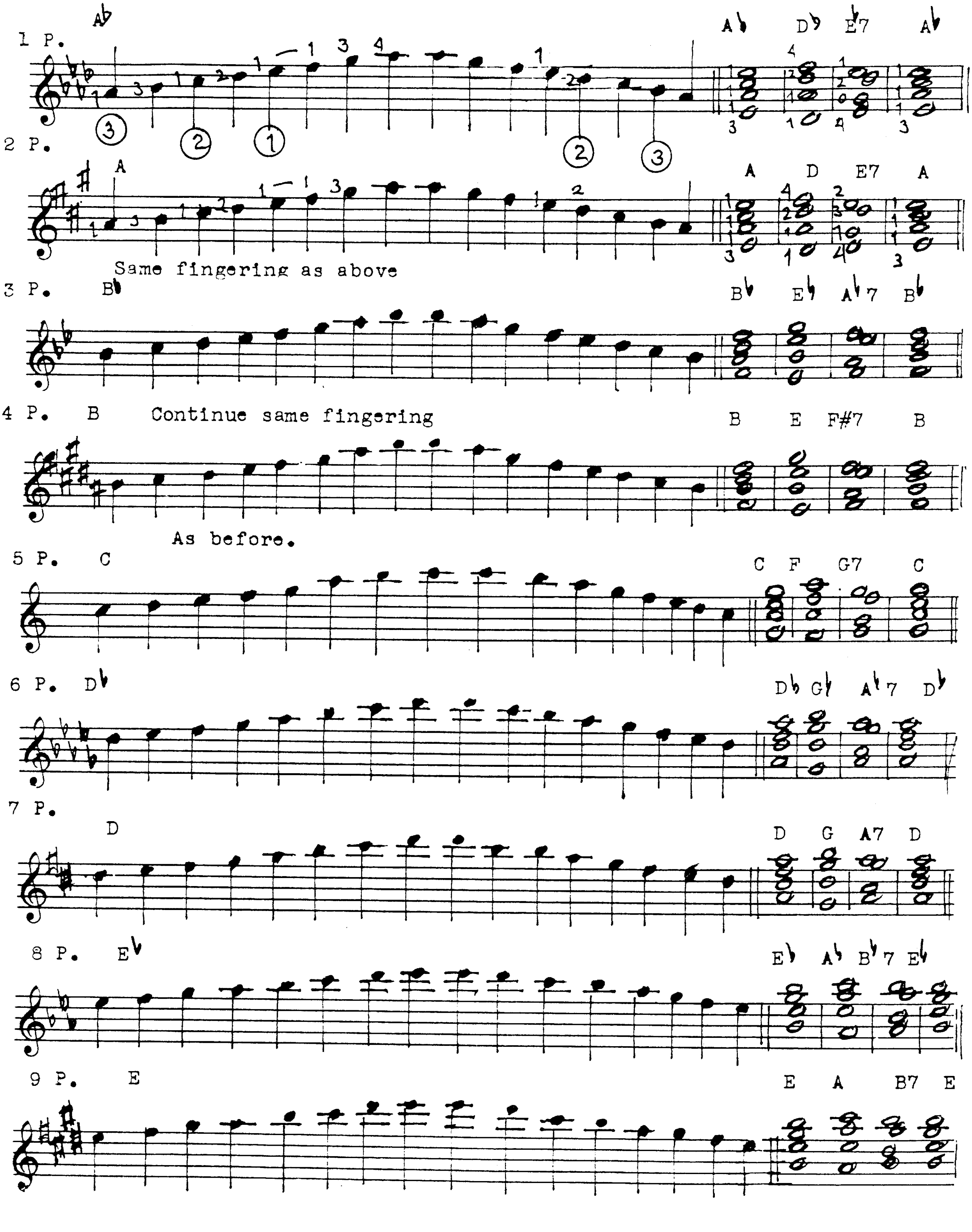
Actual Pitch

The five string, plectrum and tenor banjos, the tenor and octave mandolas, the guitar and Hawaiian guitar all sound an octave lower than their written notes. When playing from piano music (voice line preferably) we must read the indicated notes an octave higher than shown. We then are playing in the same pitch as the piano or other actual pitch instruments.

After studying the next example carefully, it is advisable to work on some familiar songs to gain proficiency in this type of playing. A little later on, you will be able to read the entire right hand of the piano part and adapt it to the banjo, and thus create your own arrangement.

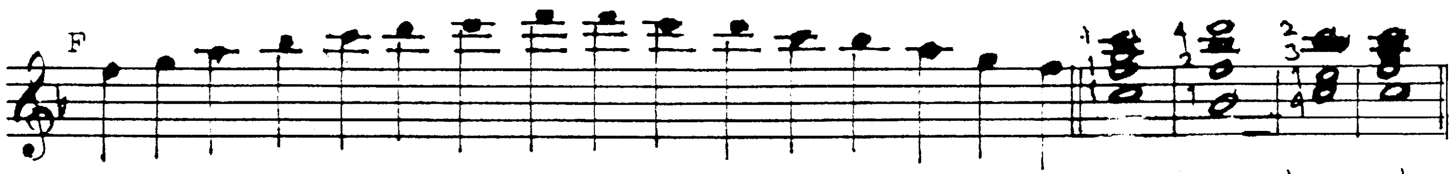


MOVABLE SCALES



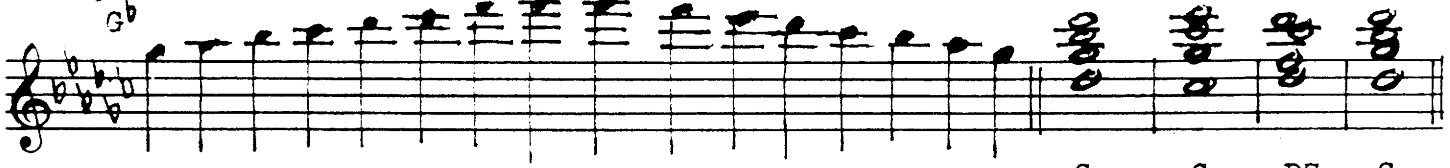
10 P.

F B♭ C7 F



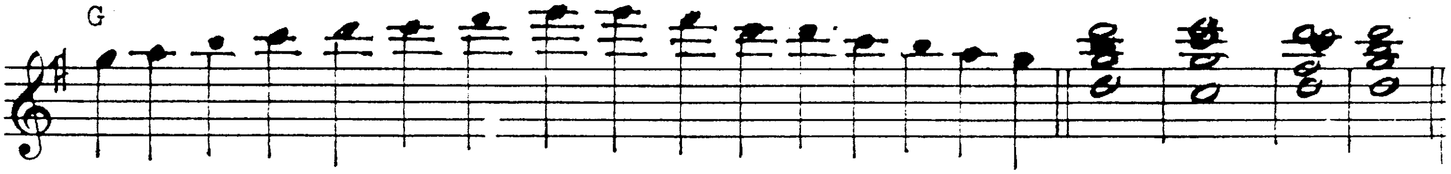
11 P.

G♭ C♭ D♭7 G♭

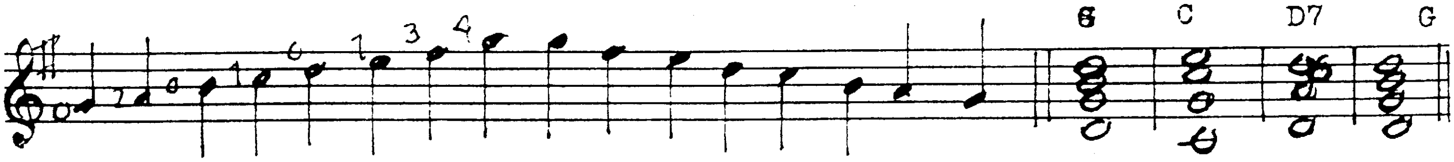


12 P.

G C D7 G



Since the notes at the twelfth fret on each string are the same as the open strings, it should be apparent that a scale starting on the thirteenth fret will be the same as that started on the first fret. The next example shows the basic form of all of these scales, starting with the third string open.



The Plectrum Style of Playing

Since this book is dedicated to the playing of the banjo in its original classic style, no mention of plectrum playing is included. There are methods available for this style of playing on the market already. However, if one wants to experiment with it, the movable scales just shown, together with their chords, will give the player a great deal of practice material.

The Tremolo

The finger tremolo on the five string banjo is artistic, effective and also difficult to do well. It is the only method in the classic style of playing that will sustain a note or chord.

Hold the right hand in such a manner that the second and third fingers are resting on the head. Now move the first finger from left to right rapidly, making certain not to "dig" into the string itself. Patience and persistance will bring the desired result. Personally, I think that the great Frederick J. Bacon was the greatest performer of the finger tremolo I ever heard.

Lesser Used Keys

It is a known fact, that every musical instrument has its "pet" keys. Years ago, before the saxophone became a part of the standard orchestra, one could find orchestrations published in the key of "A", (three sharps) and other keys which one never sees today.

For this and other reasons, the keys of C, F, G, B flat, E flat and occasionally A flat became the popular keys with musicians and their orchestra arrangers.

In abiding by these principles, the author has confined the material in this text book to these keys, and their relative minors. However, in the event that one must play in an unusual key, the formula given below will be of great assistance.

Key of D (Two sharps) This is one-half step lower than E flat. (One fret)

" " E (Four Sharps) " " " " " higher " " " (One fret higher)

" " A (Three sharps) " " " " " " " A " " " "

" " B (Five sharps) " " " " " " " B " " " "

The same chord formations given for these keys would be used in the new ones, with the rule of a fret higher or lower being used here as well.

The remainder of this book is devoted to a more diligent approach to a better technique, a more thorough use of the higher register of the banjo, and a complete up-to-date explanation of the types of syncopation in use today. The author has conscientiously avoided making this work a mere collection of "pieces", such as was done in the past. He has tried very hard to make this a worth-while text book.

I would sincerely advise all lovers of the five string banjo to become members of the AMERICAN BANJO FRATERNITY. In this way, one can find out-of-print solos for the instrument, as well as get some good "pointers" from the bulletins they publish for their membership. The Executive Secretary of the organization is William C. Kentner, 2665 Woodstock Road, Columbus, Ohio, 43221. Mr. Kentner is also librarian.

It is hoped that the student will work conscientiously on the studies that follow. If he does so, he will be able to play any of the fine compositions of the great banjoists of the past.

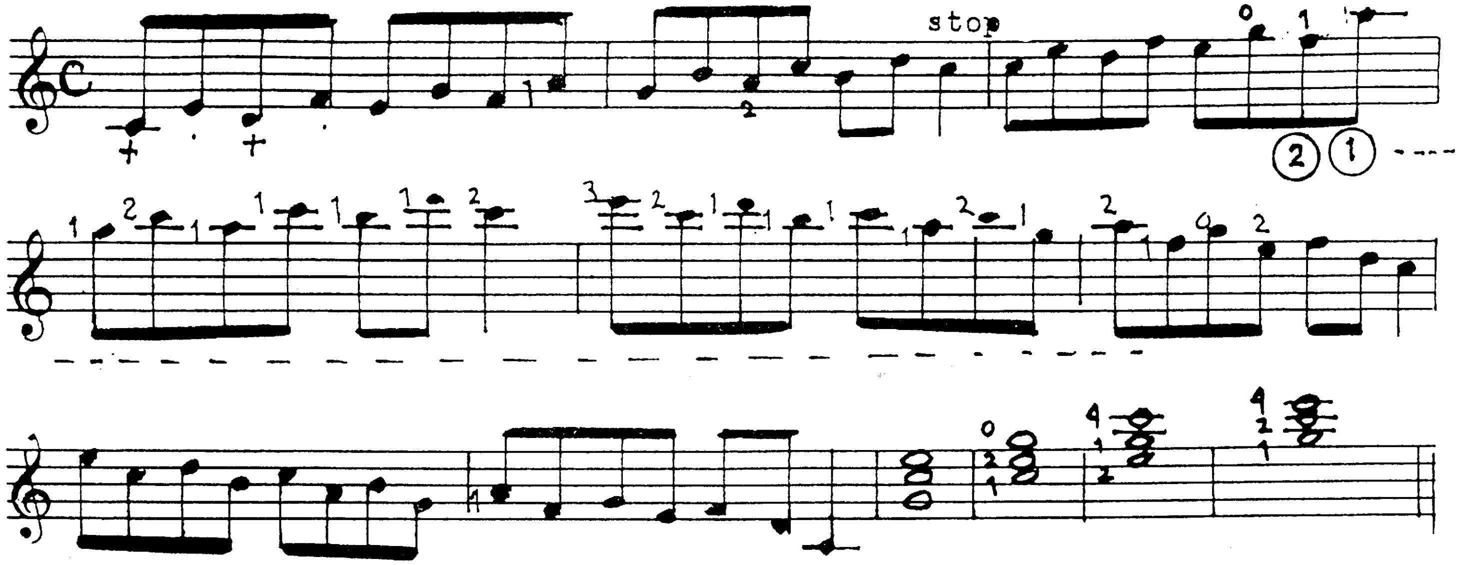
Whenever possible, published solos for the banjo in their proper grade should be assigned with the material in this book, in order to keep the player's interest at a high level.

As the student advances, he should seek the playing companionship of a pianist or guitarist or another banjoist and begin duet playing with him.

SAY

Etude in Thirds

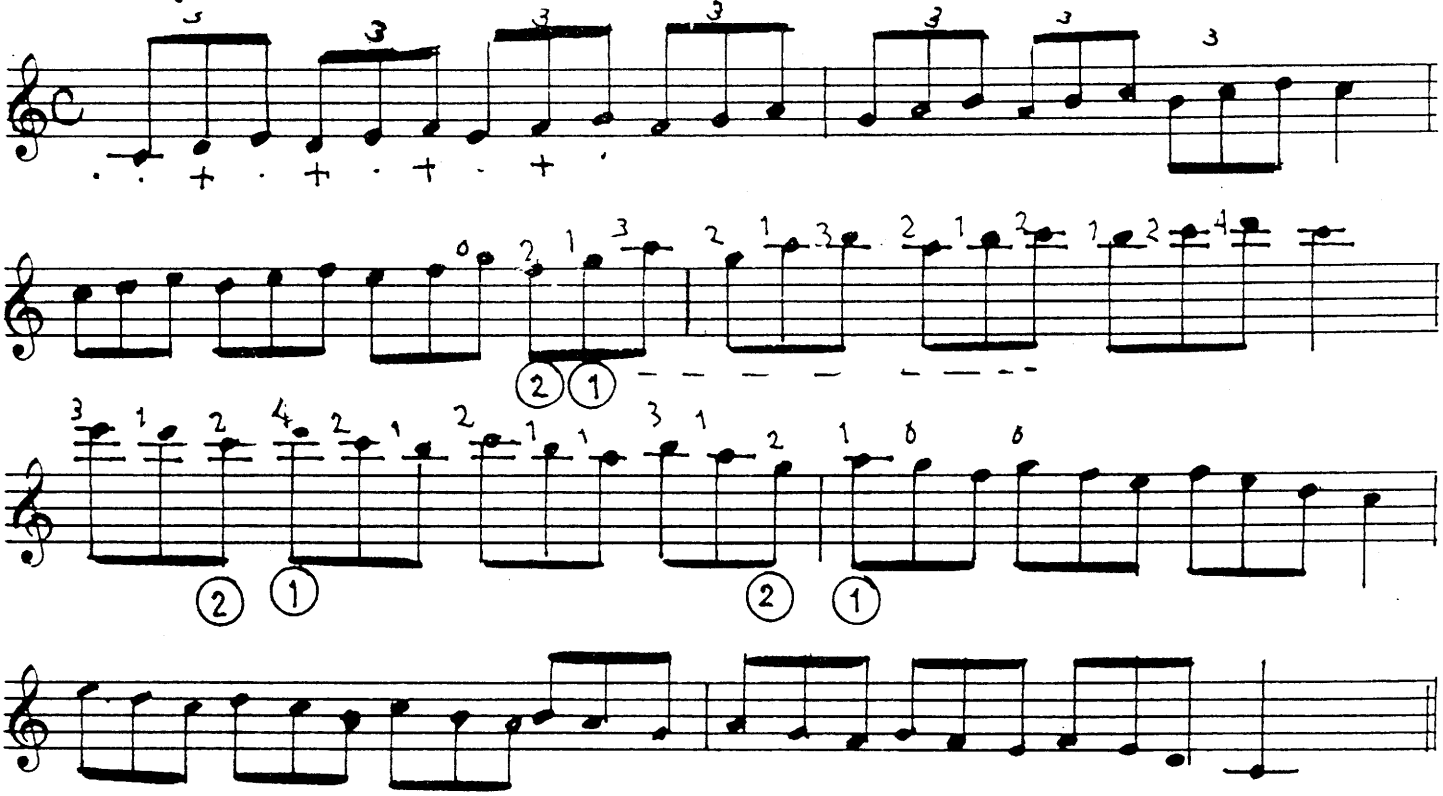
El- e-va-tor es- cal-a-tor El-e-va-tor have to stop   Continue same rhythm



SAY

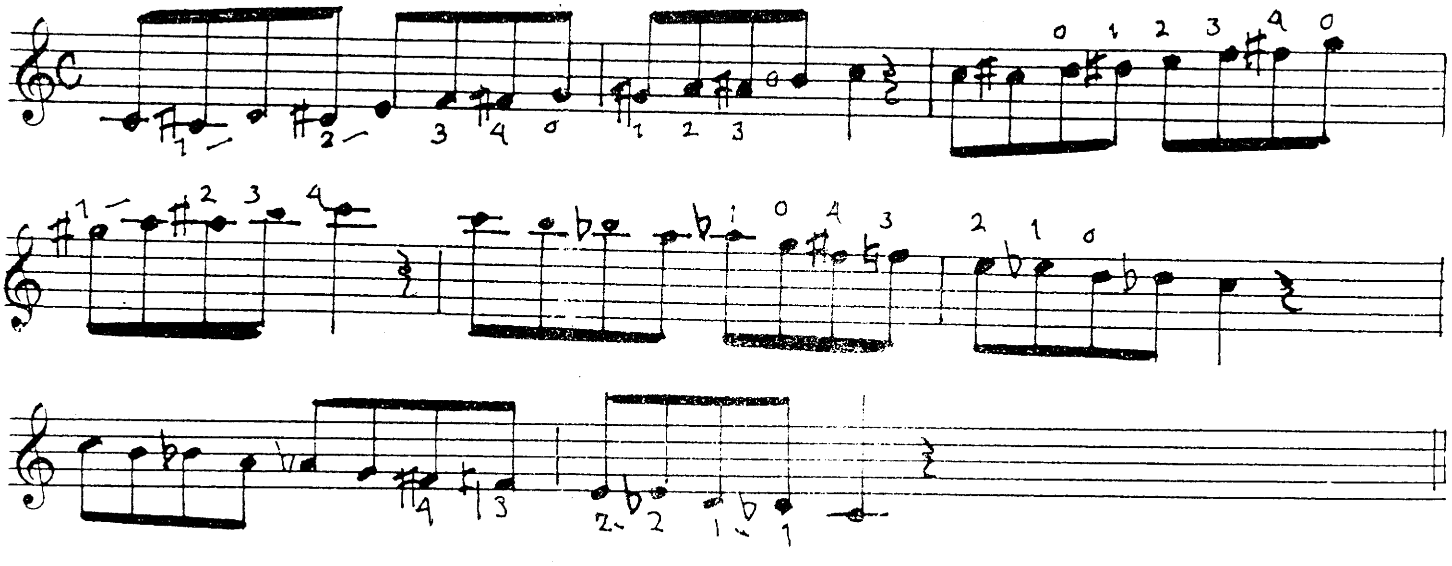
Triplets

Em-il-y Bev-er-ly, Mar-jo-rie Dor-o-thy   throughout



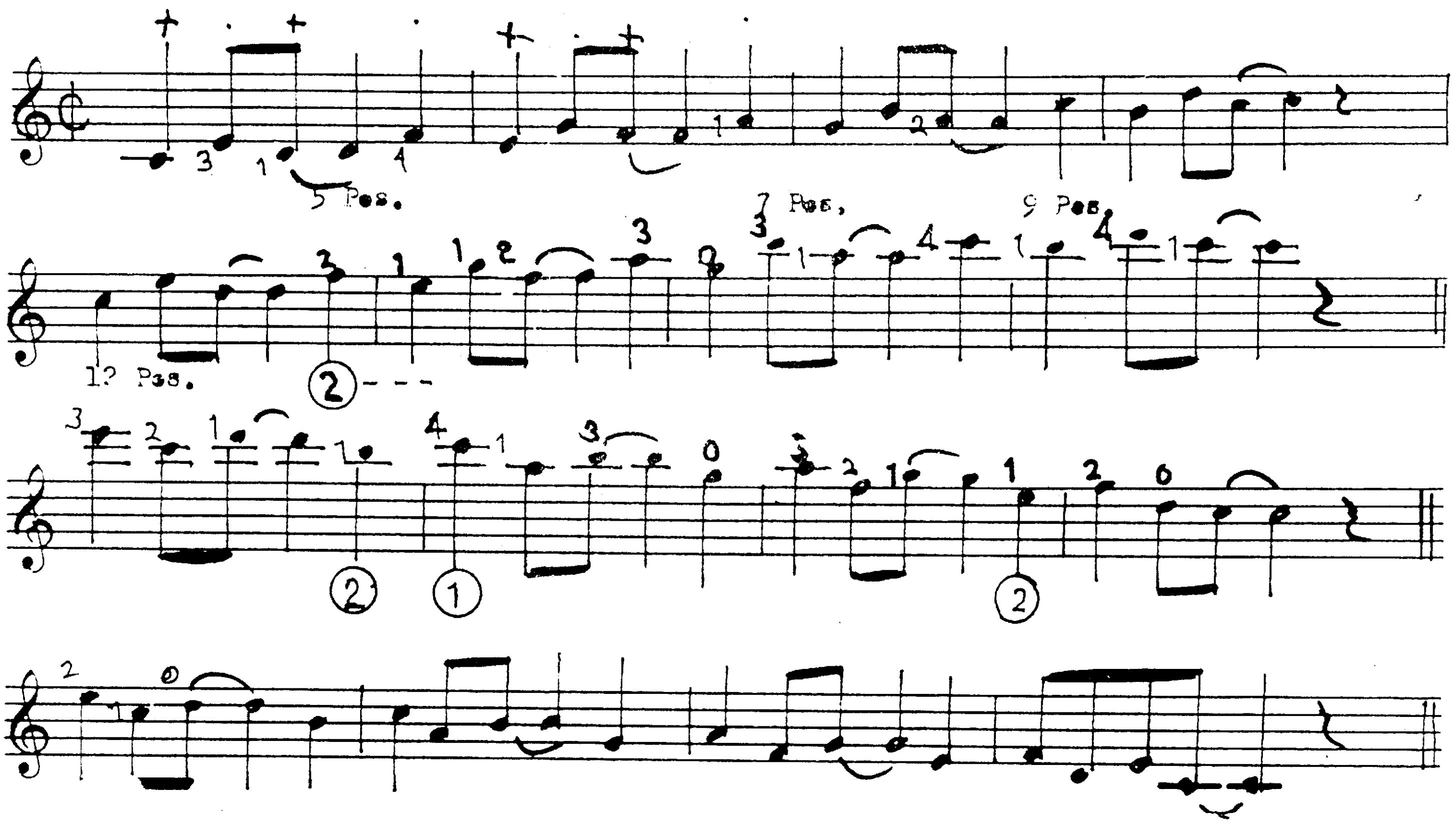
The Chromatic Scale

A chromatic scale is a scale which progresses by semitones only, usually ascending with sharps and descending with flats. It is important that this Chromatic Scale be memorized.

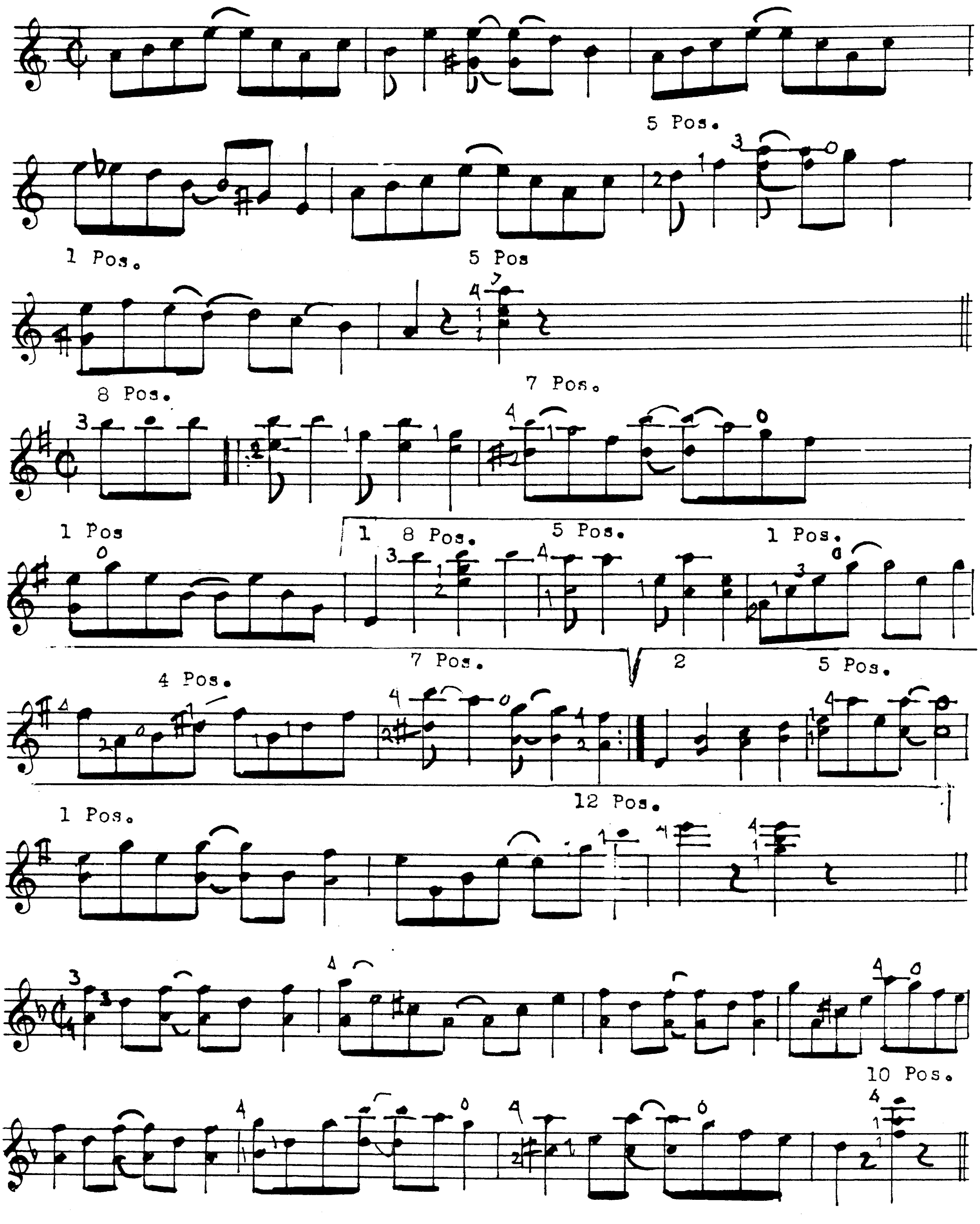


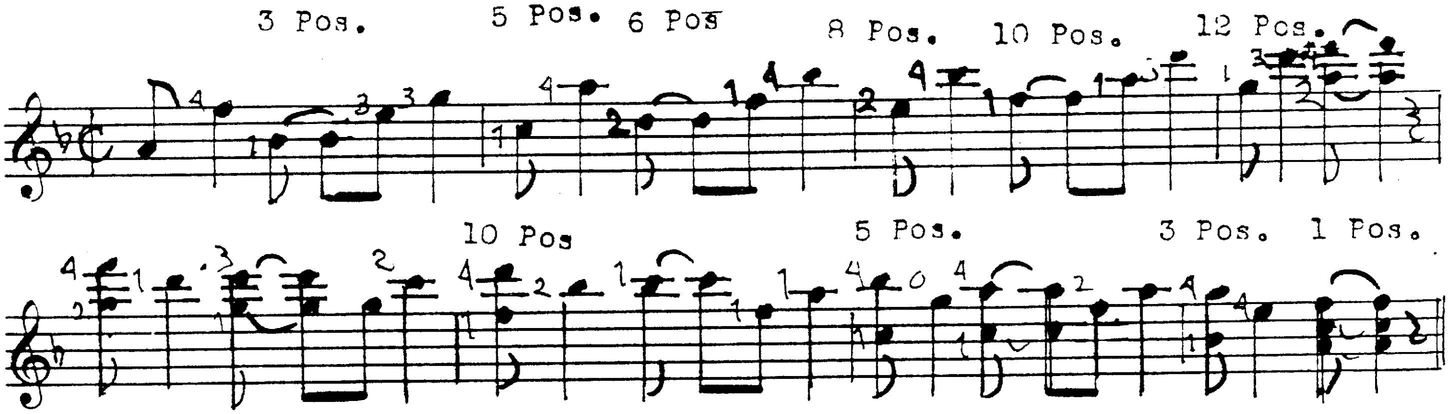
Since the first and second fingers of the left hand are the strongest, they are invariably used for "shifting", while the third and fourth are used but once for each semi-tone.

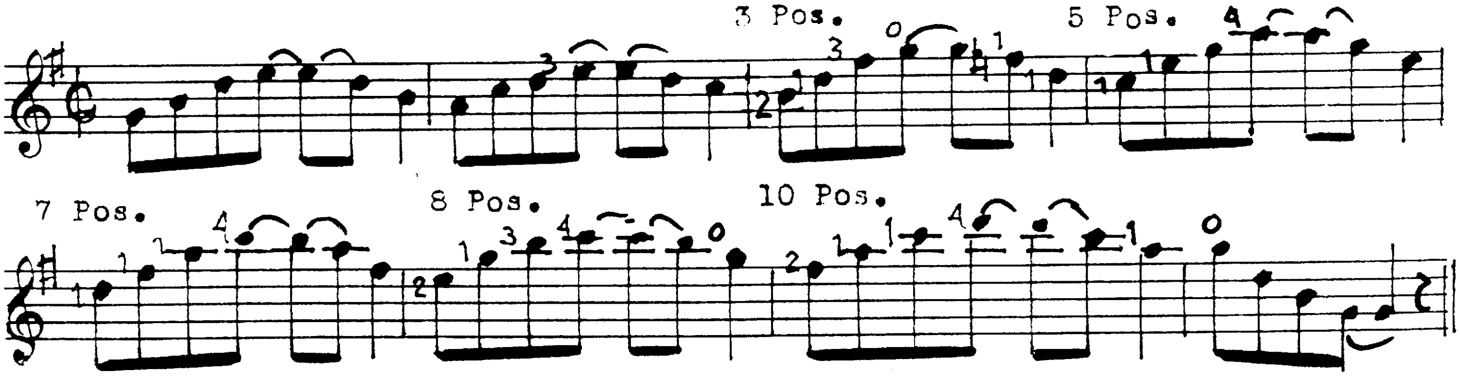
Examples of Syncopation

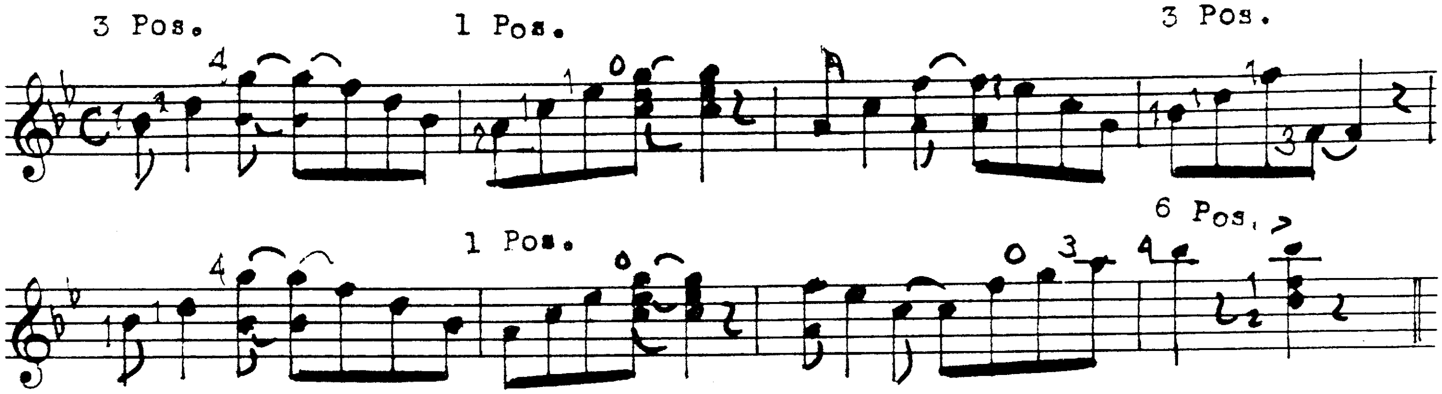


To get the proper "feel" of the above, say; RIPE, Ba-nan-a.


5 Pos.
1 Pos.
5 Pos
8 Pos.
7 Pos.
1 Pos
8 Pos.
5 Pos.
1 Pos.
4 Pos.
7 Pos.
5 Pos.
1 Pos.
12 Pos.
10 Pos.

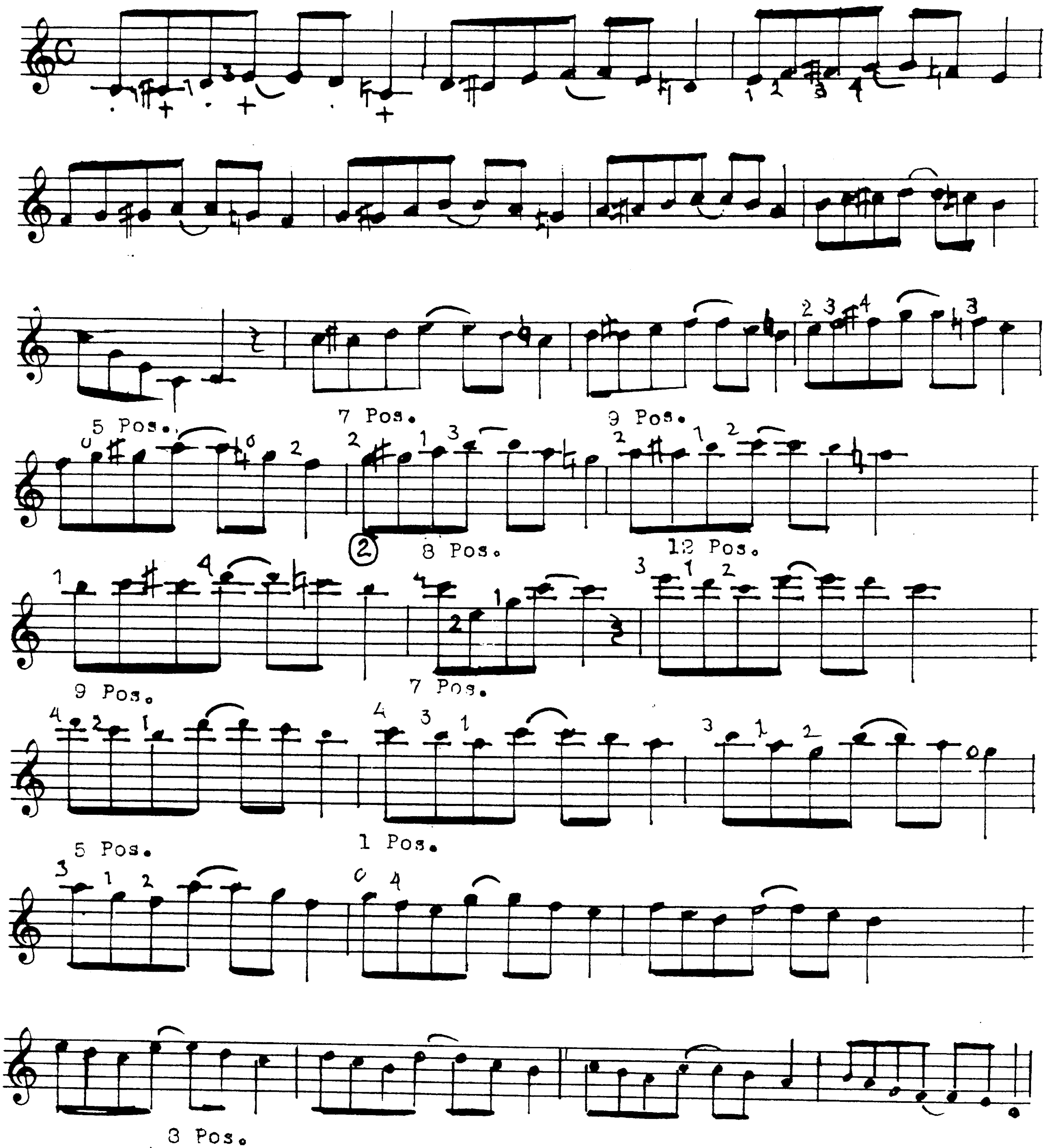


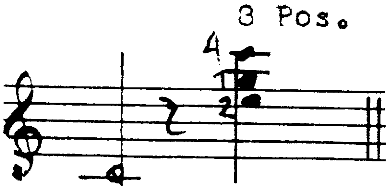




The student is now ready to start the playing of the many famous rag time pieces such as MUSKRAT RAMBLE, TIGER RAG, RIVERSIDE RAG, SWEET-MEATS, GRACE AND BEAUTY, and the dozens of other fine compositions of American composers. A word of caution-

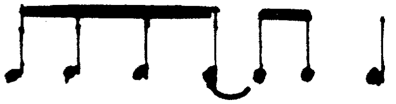
PLAY RAG TIME SLOWLY. It is never to be played at a rapid tempo, with the possible exception of TWELFTH STREET RAG.

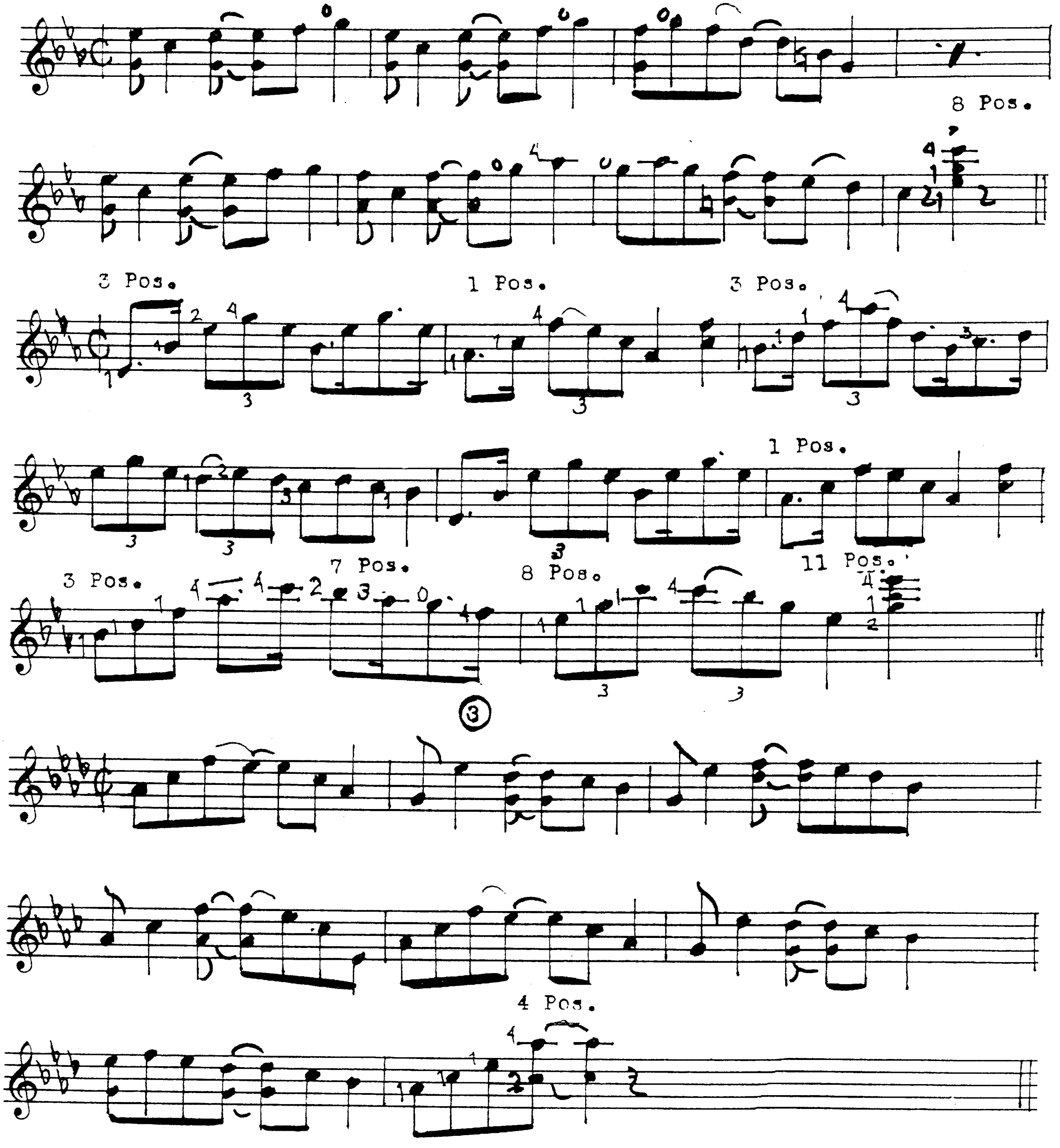




The rhythm pattern of the above exercise should sound like

Play me that tune a- gain



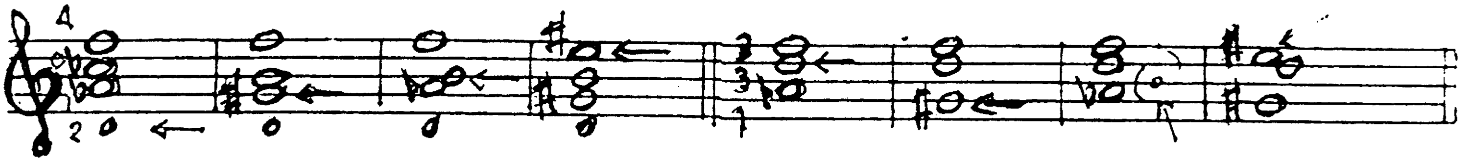

8 Pos.
3 Pos.
1 Pos.
3 Pos.
1 Pos.
3 Pos.
7 Pos.
8 Pos.
11 Pos.
③
4 Pos.

Diminished 7th Chords

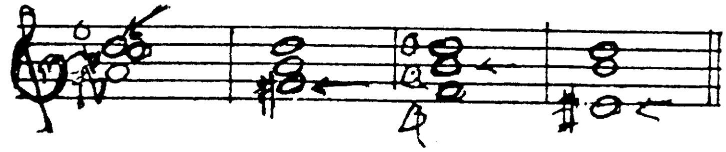
The diminished seventh chord, is formed on the seventh degree of the minor scale. When played in complete form, it has four separate notes. This being the case, and the fact that their are but twelve sounds in music, as shown in the chromatic scale, it becomes apparent that we have but three diminished chords.

The first of the following examples may be played as either a three or four string chord. The arrow indicates the root or name of it. The first of this set of diminished seventh chords is called a "basic" formation, since it contains an open string. All of the others are movable since every note is "stopped" or fingered.

Now play the first chord, and stop. Look carefully at the next one and then play it. You will notice that you do not have to move your hands at all. However, the notes are somewhat different, and it has a different root. Again, we call this "enharmonic". Now play the next two chords and again note that we do not change our fingers at all, and that each sounds like the first two, but have different names. Following this first group, we find still another formation of the diminished seventh chord with much different fingering. Note that all four of these sound alike too. When the root appears in parentheses, it shows that it is not possible to play with the others. This group of chords is movable.

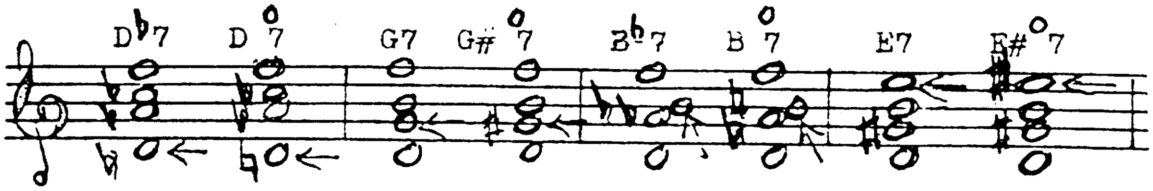


The next example shows still another formation of the diminished seventh chord. Here again, we have basic formations because of the use of the open strings.



If you will take the time now to look at the chromatic scale, you will see that we have used up four of the possible twelve sounds therein.

Another good thing to remember about this much mis-understood chord, is that it may be made very easily, by raising the root of any dominant seventh chord a half step.

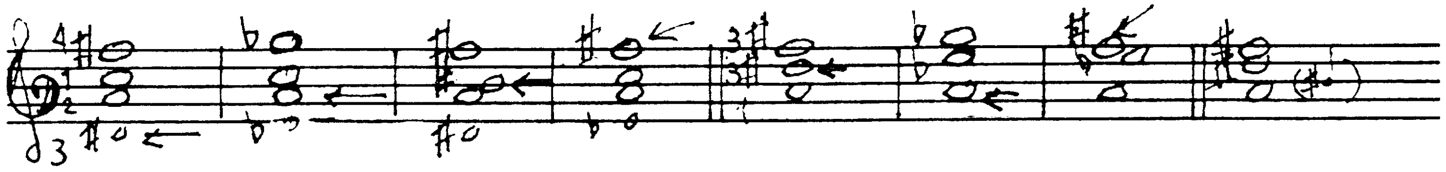


D diminished seventh is formed on the seventh tone of the scale of E♭m
G# " " " " " " " " " " " " Am
B " " " " " " " " " " " " Cm
E# " " " " " " " " " " " " F#m

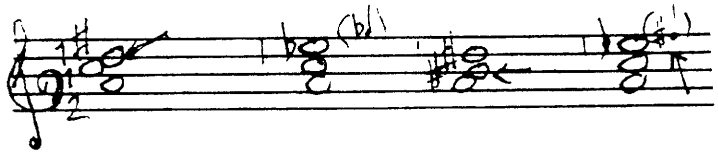
The regular resolution (progression) of the diminished seventh chord is to its own minor (a half step higher) or to the major or dominant seventh chord a half step higher or to any other chord having tones in common.

DIMINISHED SEVENTH CHORDS--Continued

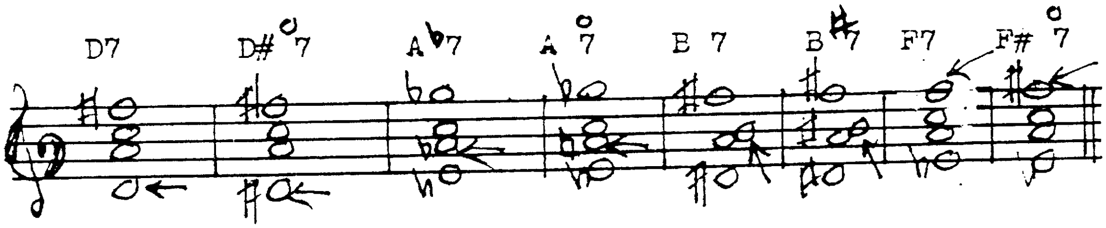
The next set of diminished seventh chords are what is termed "movable." Since every note is fingered, a new diminished seventh may be formed on any fret. Notice too that all four chords sound alike, and thus they too are enharmonic. Now we have used up eight of the possible twelve sounds of the chromatic scale.



Next is the other possible fingering of this set of chords. If we take any one of these movable examples, and then move it three frets higher, we will have the same sounding chord in another inversion. Try it and then move each succeeding chord three frets at a time.



Now let us find out from what dominant seventh chords this group of diminished chords sprang.



D# diminished seventh is formed on the seventh tone of the scale of E m
A " " " " " " " " " " " B m
B# " " " " " " " " " " " C#m
F# " " " " " " " " " " " Gm

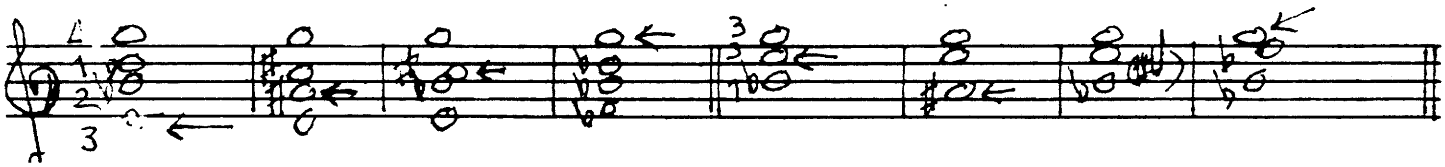
The regular resolution of these chords is again governed by the rules previously given. Each goes to its own minor one-half step higher, or to a major or dominant seventh a half-step higher, or to any other chord with which it has tones in common.

Many arrangers have been very careless in labeling chords in-correctly. While it is possible to make diminished seventh chords on the notes C and F, they are actually "illegal.", since there is no minor scale in existence that has either of these notes as the seventh or leading tone.

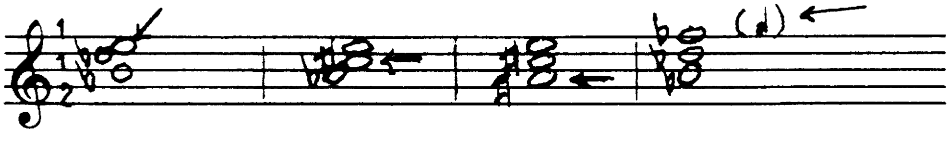
In a like manner, the idea that any finger will name a diminished chord since they all have the same tablature shape, is a misnomer. As the irate Irishamn once said "If a cat has kittens in an oven, you cant call 'em biscuits! "

DIMINISHED SEVENTH CHORDS--Continued.

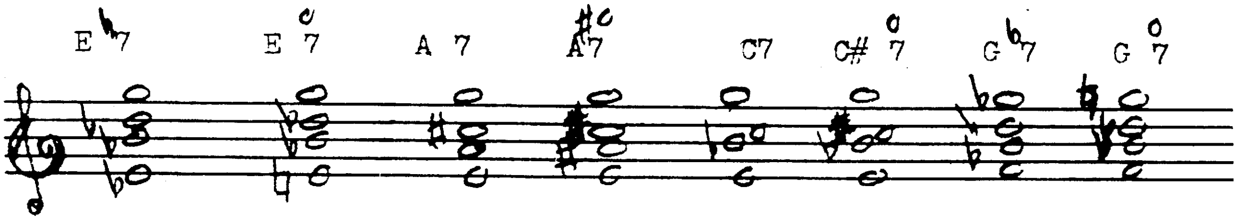
Our final set of diminished seventh chords will use up the last four sounds in the chromatic scale. They will also be fingered the same as the last movable group, and by moving each one three frets higher will obtain continuous inversions of the same chord.



And here is the other possible set of diminished seventh chords.



We shall now see from what dominant seventh chords these diminished sevenths were derived.



E diminished seventh is formed on the seventh tone of the scale of Fm
A# " " " " " " " " " " " " Bm
C# " " " " " " " " " " " " Dm
G " " " " " " " " " " " " A m

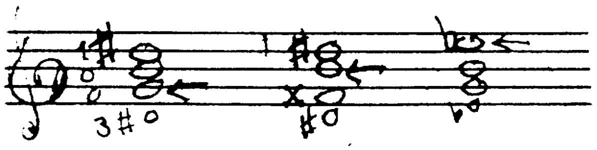
By this time of course your tired of all this theory. Remember however, that you will be using these chords for the rest of your musical life. Appreciate their value and the "ground rules" that govern their use. You might just as well be a good <u>musician</u> rather than some of the people who pose as one.

And a final word. If you see diminished seventh chords marked improperly, make it a point to correct their nomenclature in accordance with what you have learned in this chapter. It will make your playing smoother and your perception much sharper. It will also do wonders for your execution.

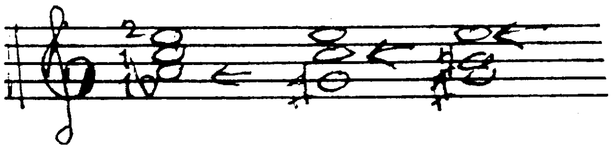
Augmented Chords

When the fifth tone of any major triad is raised a half-step we make what is called an augmented triads. There are also dominant seventh and ninth chords with the fifth raised, but since this book is not devoted to theory alone, we will leave those two chords up to the pupil to search for.

The first set of augmented chords shown here, are the basic type and may be played as either three or four note chords.

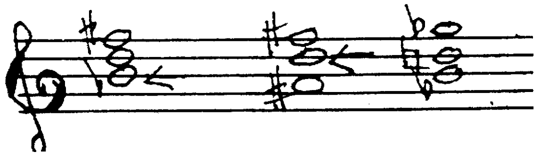


The next set gives us the movable version of the chord. By holding the fingers in the same pattern, and by moving four frets higher in succession we get the inversion of each augmented triad.



The next set of augmented chords is fingered exactly the same as the last, but starting one fret higher. Again, we can move these every four frets to get the inversions.

The final set of augmented chords begins a fret higher than the last. We now find that there are <u>four</u> augmented triads, and since each has but three notes, we must of course have used up all of the notes of the chromatic scale here too.



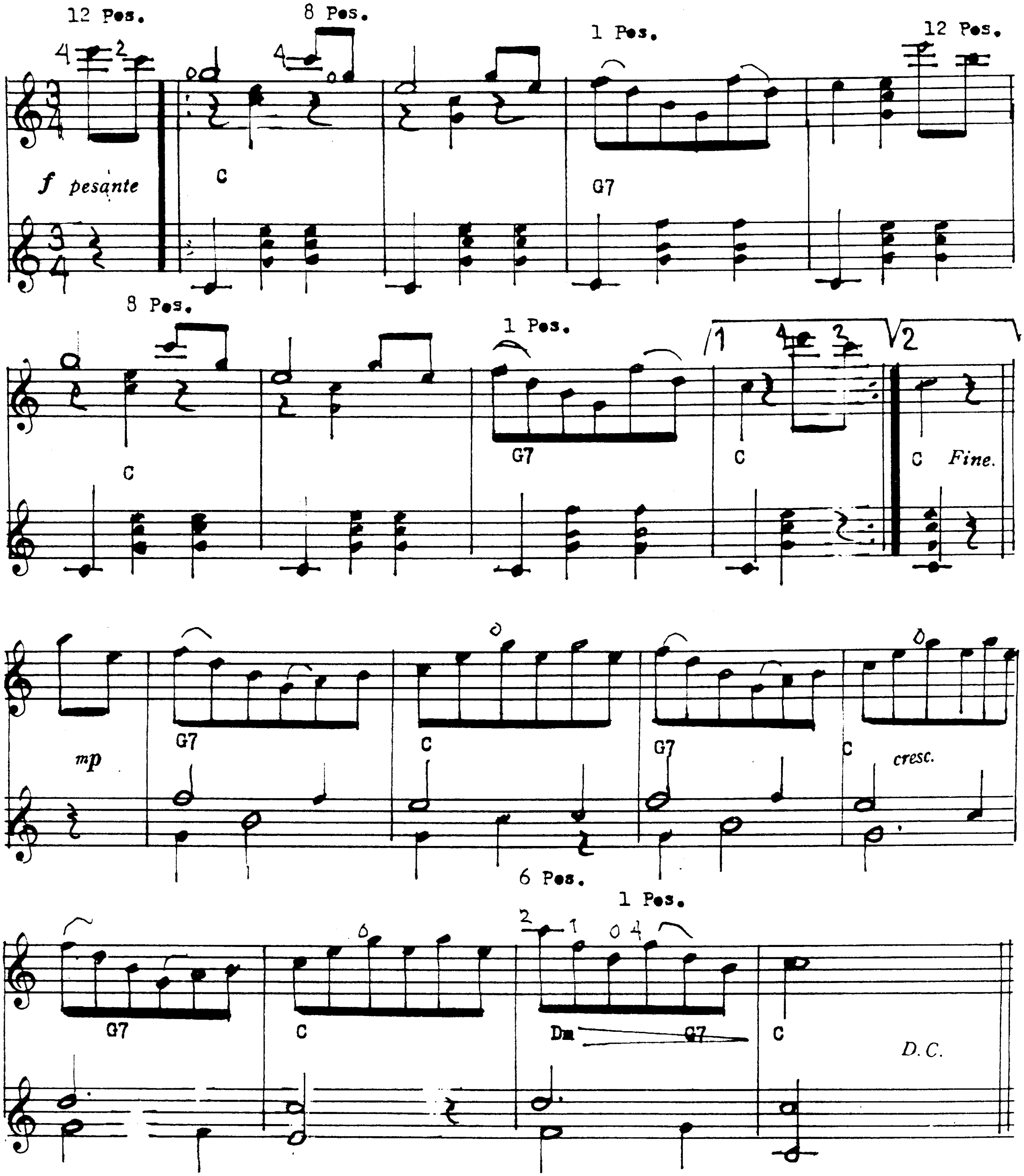
Banjo Duet

Country Waltz

Joseph Haydn
(1732~1809)

Arr. by Walter Kaye Bauer

Animato



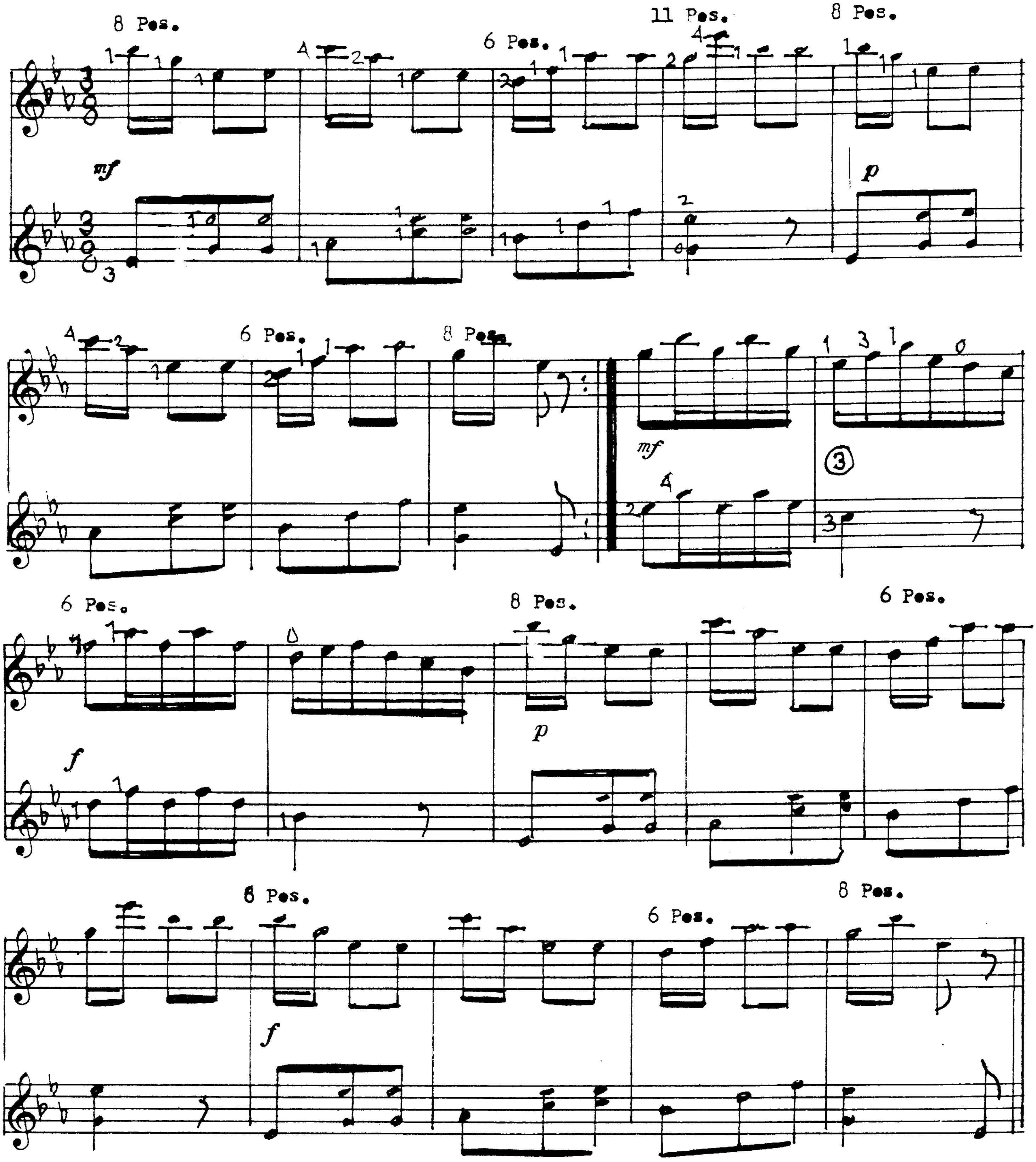
The German term for a country waltz is "Landler"

Banjo Duet

Allegretto Scherzando

Christian Gottlob Neefe
(1748~1798)

Arr. by Walter Kaye Bauer



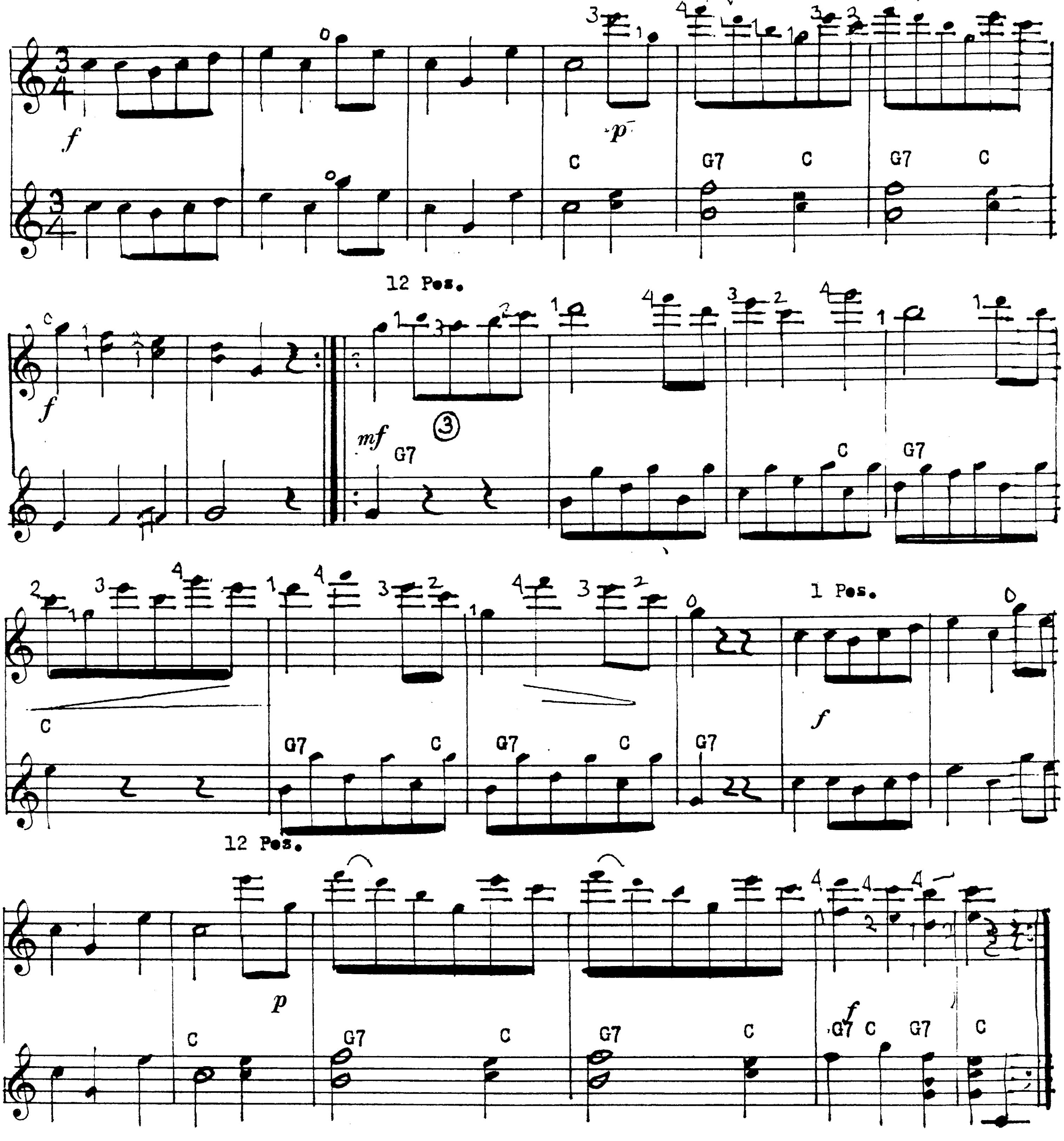
Banjo Duet

Country Minuet

Joseph Haydn
(1732~1809)

Arr. by Walter Kaye Bauer

Allegretto



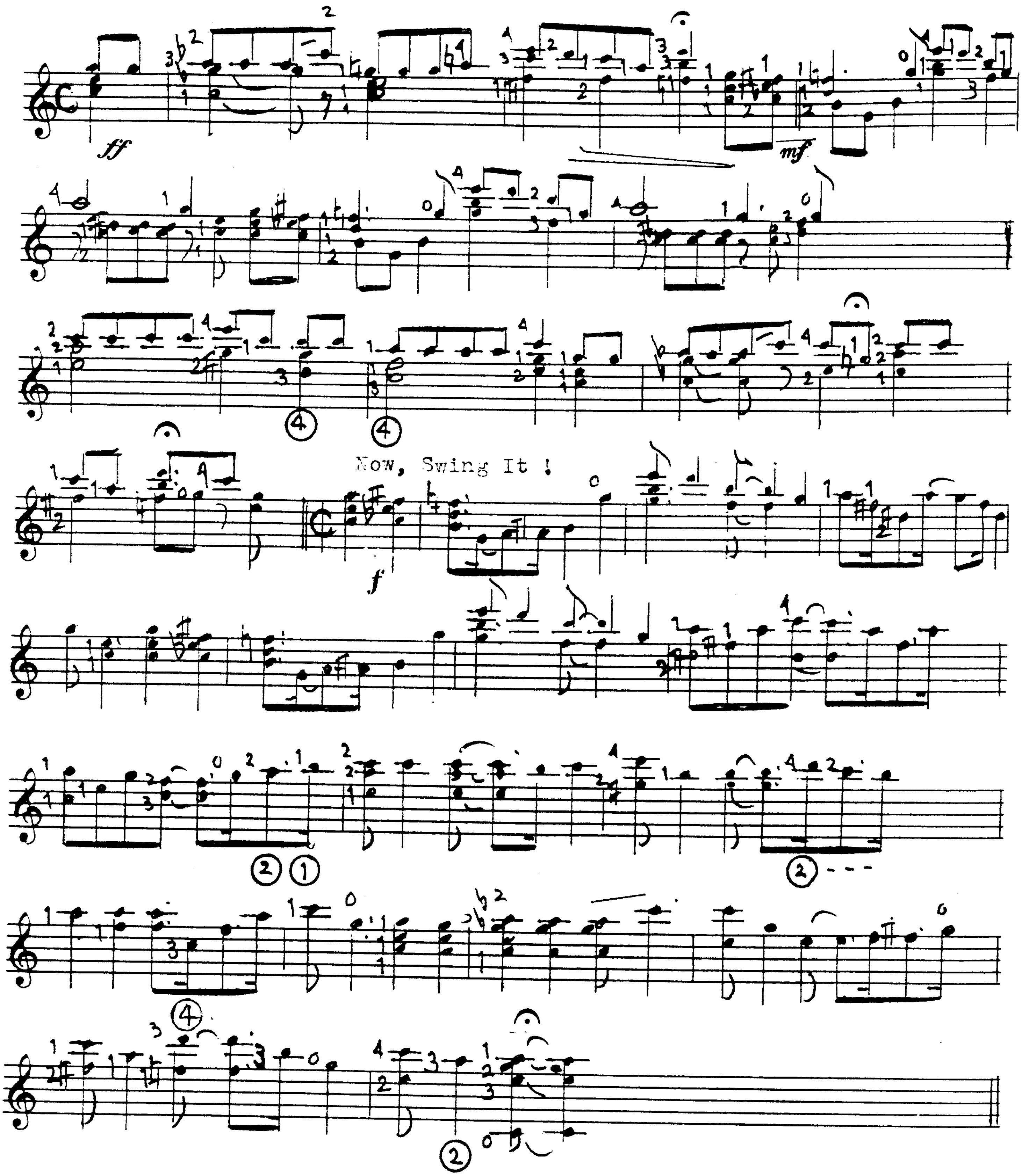
Banjo Solo

DEAR OLD GIRL

THEODORE MORSE

Arr. by Walter Kaye Bauer

Andante moderato



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